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MEMOIRS OF
RICHARD COBDEN



EDITED BY MRS. GALE SOUTHWELL







REMINISCENCES
OF
RICHARD COBDEN



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REMINISCENCES
OF 92303
RICHARD COBDEN

COMPILED BY
MRS SALIS SCHWABE

WITH A PREFACE BY LORD FARRER

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REMINISCENCES
OF
92303
RICHARD COBDEN

COMPILED BY
MRS SALIS SCHWABE

WITH A PREFACE BY LORD FARRER

London
T. FISHER UNWIN
PATERNOSTER SQUARE
MDCCCXCV

P R E F A C E

THIS volume of Reminiscences of Richard Cobden was published in French in 1879 by his old and dear friend Mrs Salis Schwabe. Besides various public speeches and addresses, it contains much private correspondence which throws an interesting light on the character and friendship of this great Englishman. Mrs Schwabe, well known for her zeal and successful efforts in the cause of education, now publishes these Reminiscences in English for the benefit of the Froebel Educational Institute ; and she asks me to add a word of preface. I should in any case have felt pride and pleasure in complying with such a request from an old and valued friend ; but there is, perhaps, a certain special propriety in her application, since, much as Cobden's life and work has influenced my own, a meeting at her house was the only occasion on which I ever spoke with him. It was in Paris, when he was there on the business of the French Treaty, and I well remember the interest I felt in hearing him talk. He told us a story concerning his attitude with respect to the Crimean War which is still worth repeating. He said that during the controversy concerning the Holy Places, which was the ostensible

origin of that war, he dined one day at the Duke of Newcastle's in company with a number of distinguished men—including several foreign diplomatists, and the editor of the *Times*. After dinner they fell into talk about the pending controversy, and there was a general agreement that there ought to be no difficulty whatever in settling such a quarrel; and he, Cobden, went on to say, that if diplomacy could not settle it, diplomacy ought to be abolished. As they went upstairs the editor of the *Times* came up to him and said,—‘I trust that you will, in public, urge the views you have been expressing as well and as strongly as you have urged them to-night.’ Cobden's reply was,—‘Yes, I certainly shall do so to the utmost of my power, and, what is more, you will abuse me for it;’ which is, as Cobden said, exactly what happened.

I am the more glad to say a word on the subject of Cobden's life and doings since there are many of the present generation who, as it seems to me, not only undervalue the great reform which he and his friends effected, but who also misconceive and misrepresent the character of his mind. Because he supported a cause which at the same time increased the wealth of the rich and the comforts of the poor, he is accused of a devotion to material prosperity and a disregard of nobler life and higher motives. The charge is unfounded. He wished to promote physical well-being; for he knew that health of the

body is necessary for the life of the soul: he hated the pauperising influence of Protection, but he abhorred its injustice and inhumanity even more. He believed it to be an impious attempt to defeat the beneficent intentions of the Maker of the world. 'Free Trade,' he said to Mrs Schwabe, 'is a Divine Law; if it were not, the world would have been differently created. One country has cotton, another wine, another coal, which is a proof that, according to the Divine Order of things, men should fraternise and exchange their goods and thus further Peace and Goodwill on Earth.' Because he was opposed to the amount of State intervention with labour which finds favour in the present day, he is supposed to be the apostle of a school which looked only to the accumulation of wealth, and cared little for the higher well-being of the millions employed in creating it. Nothing can be more untrue. The words on this subject which he has left on record deserve to be framed in letters of gold in days when there is a sentimental tendency to believe that some entity called the State is to do everything for everybody, and that nobody is to be encouraged, or even allowed, to do more for himself than that modicum of work which the State allots to him. I need no apology for repeating these words:—

'I yield to no man in the world (be he ever so stout an advocate of the Ten Hours Bill) in a hearty goodwill towards the great body of the

working classes ; but my sympathy is not of that morbid kind which would lead me to despond over their future prospects. Nor do I partake of that spurious humanity which would indulge in an un-reasoning kind of philanthropy at the expense of the great bulk of the community. Mine is that masculine species of charity which would lead me to inculcate in the minds of the labouring classes the love of independence, the privilege of self-respect, the disdain of being patronised or petted, the desire to accumulate and the ambition to rise. I know it has been found easier to please the people by holding out flattering and delusive prospects of cheap benefits to be derived from Parliament, rather than by urging them to a course of self-reliance ; but while I will not be the sycophant of the great, I cannot become the parasite of the poor ; and I have sufficient confidence in the growing intelligence of the working classes to be induced to believe that they will be found to contain a great proportion of minds sufficiently enlightened by experience to concur with me in the opinion, that it is to themselves alone individually that they, as well as every other great section of the community, must trust for working out their own regeneration and happiness. Again I say to them,—“Look not to Parliament, look only to yourselves.”’*

Cobden probably under-estimated the benefits

* *Morley's Life of Richard Cobden*, Vol. I. page 457.

and over-estimated the dangers of State interference with industry, for I do not think that at present, at any rate, interference has crippled English industry. But we are not without symptoms of the dangers which Cobden foresaw. If the working men of this country are ever to lose the benefit which the Repeal of the Corn Laws and other Free Trade measures have conferred upon them, it will probably be in consequence of a combined effort of employers on the one hand, groaning under the restrictions which are placed upon them by the State and by Trades Unions ; and of Trades Union leaders on the other—seeking to control the whole conditions of labour, and feeling that this control cannot be extended to their foreign competitors.

I do not believe that the strong sense and vigorous individualism of Englishmen will be led captive by any such combination, but threats of it are in the air ; and such a combined effort for protection, backed by the selfish interests of land and of capital, might possibly render it necessary to appeal again to the principles which Cobden advocated, and to agitate the question of Free Trade afresh by an appeal to the workmen as consumers ; an appeal, it may be added, which was successfully prosecuted on a recent occasion, when an attempt was made by Lord Salisbury's Government to re-introduce protection in the form of retaliation against bounty-fed sugar, and to combine for this purpose

the interests of Capitalist manufacturers on the one hand, and of Trades Union leaders on the other.

But though Cobden was opposed to factory legislation for adults, he was no fanatic on the subject of the non-interference of the State, as some of the contents of this volume testify. Some of the most eloquent and stirring of his speeches and addresses are in favour of that public education which has since been so greatly developed ; and this is the more remarkable since on this subject he differed entirely from some of his most trusted friends and colleagues.

In truth, Cobden was one of those noble men whose whole thoughts and work and life are devoted to the welfare of their fellow-creatures, and especially to the welfare of the largest and least prosperous classes among them ; but who, at the same time, pursue those objects without fawning, fear or flattery, and who care little for the momentary favour of the people they most desire to serve.

In the great Corn Law struggle his first and most eager desire was to carry the working classes with him in working out their own salvation ; and it was, as he has told us, only when they rejected the object he thought all-important, in favour of the points of the Charter, that he and his friends were compelled to turn to the middle class for support, and to make the agitation a middle-class struggle.

In all his subsequent efforts for Education, for Free Trade, and for Peace, it was the welfare of the

working classes which lay nearest to his heart—and whether they agreed with him or not, this was the object which he steadily pursued. Peace, above all things: Peace, which is the best friend of industry, was his one great object—an object so overwhelmingly important that he perhaps sometimes allowed it to obscure the actual conditions of imperfect human nature. But if so, the error is a venial one, and shines out as a virtue amid the excitements of international jealousy and war which darken every page of our history. To me it has always seemed that the action of Cobden and Bright at the time of the Crimean War was the noblest thing which has been done by public men in our time. They had succeeded, after a prolonged and laborious agitation, in carrying, against the determined resistance of a powerful aristocracy, the most beneficent reform effected during the present century, and, in so doing, they had at last taken the mass of the people with them, and had become the most trusted and the most powerful of democratic leaders. All this power they sacrificed when it became obvious that their opinions on the subject of peace and war were opposed to the feelings and the passions of the people they had served and led so well. They flung aside, not only their claims to place and office, which was a trifle, but that influence which is so dear to every man who is interested in great objects, and they retired

into comparative insignificance, rather than sacrifice the interests to the wishes of the people.

In these later years we have come to see that Cobden and Bright were right, and that the mass of the English people and their leaders were wrong, but this change no one foresaw at the time; and Cobden, at any rate, died before the alteration in popular feeling could make amends for the injustice which had been done to him.

Their attitude on this occasion always brings forcibly to my mind some of the last words I ever heard from Bright. I was speaking to him of the interest with which I had watched some of the great political meetings on the subject of the Suffrage, and was telling him how much the intelligent interest of the crowds had impressed me. 'Yes,' he said, 'the people are a good people on the whole, and if those who claim to be their leaders speak the truth to them—all will be well, but if they do not—God help them both.' The lesson contained in these words and in the lives of these two great men is one which we cannot take to heart too strongly in days when the growth of kindly feeling and the interests of political parties combine to blind us to the inevitable facts which underlie our social existence; and which, if ignored, will vitiate all we do.

FARRER.

19th December 1894.

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REMINISCENCES
OF
RICHARD COBDEN

—o—

I.

From Mr COBDEN to Mr SALIS SCHWABE.

MACHYNLLETH, MONTGOMERYSHIRE,
12 July 1846.

MY DEAR SIR,—It is really strange that *your* route for me had been passing in my mind since I saw you. The only difference between us is, that I should prefer reaching Spain by Bordeaux and the Pyrenees, the scenery of the latter is, I am told, nearly equal to the Alps. I have seen Switzerland several times, and my wife has also seen it. But my chief motive for wishing to go by Bordeaux is that I may do good there. There is nothing for me to teach or learn in Switzerland. Now, can you contrive to meet us on that track? I have no map at hand, and therefore can't even guess how it is to be done. But I should be delighted with your company to Madrid. Since I saw you, I have had a communication from a personal friend and confidant of

the Emperor of Russia. It is to this effect,—‘I have heard that you talk of going to Egypt, your destination ought to be St Petersburg—a visit there would be of great importance—the Czar is very liable to take impressions from strong minds, especially with a prestige of success connected with them. You ought to go and see him.’ My mind is made up to go and see the ‘great bear.’ With God’s blessing, I will see all the leading potentates and statesmen of Europe. I will be an ambassador from the Free-traders of England to the governments of the great nations of the Continent. But we must be profoundly secret upon this subject. If it were known that I started with any such design of propagandism, all the protectionists and smugglers would be plotting to thwart me, or, perhaps, some of the latter might *shoot us* on our way to Madrid. We must not therefore drop a hint about it, for the *penny-a-liners* are ready to put any scrap of news about me in the newspapers. I shall tell nobody my destination beyond Paris. But pray drop me a line to say if you could plan a route for yourself, by which we could meet upon the French side of the Pyrenees, you going by Geneva and I by Bordeaux. I could suit you as to time.

Now, as respects the chariot. If the *wheels*, *axles* and *perch*, are trustworthy for going over three or four thousand miles of Continental roads, *that* is all I care about. I don’t mind about the appearance. If you will order it to be fitted up with boxes, etc., for a long journey, I shall be obliged. If it costs one say £60 or £70 complete, it will certainly be less than half of what I should have to pay in London, to say nothing of economy of time and trouble for me. We shall carry as little luggage, clothes, etc., as possible, for experience

has taught me that travellers always encumber themselves with double as much baggage as necessary. Will you oblige me further by letting my brother Frederic know when you have made the bargain, but I must trouble *you* to order the boxes, etc., for he does not understand what is wanted.

My wife will write to Mrs Schwabe to-morrow. She joins me in kind regards to you both, and believe me, very faithfully yours,

RICHARD COBDEN.

II.

Mrs SALIS SCHWABE from the Pyrenees and Spain
to her Friends in England. 1846.

PAU, *September 27th*, 1846.

We arrived here yesterday evening at nine o'clock, where we met our dear friends Mr and Mrs Cobden, who welcomed us most heartily. You will be astonished to hear that Mr Schwabe is this morning engaged with Mr Cobden in studying Murray's Guide and the map of Spain, for one hears so much of the festivities which are about to take place at Madrid, on account of the impending marriages of the Queen and her younger sister, that we, being only three days' journey from Madrid, feel ourselves induced to take a peep at some of the

grand sights, etc., in that metropolis, and finding such pleasant travelling companions as Mr and Mrs Cobden is, of course, a double inducement for us to make the excursion.

Sept. 28th, 1846.

I now must tell you in full earnest that we are indeed going to Spain, notwithstanding banditti and contrabandists. As travelling with private carriages is as yet, we hear, unadvisable in Spain, we intend to go the greater part of the journey by *malle-poste*. Mr Cobden has already been so kind as to write to the Maire of Bayonne, a friend of his, to engage the whole *coupé* and a *place d'intérieur* in the *malle-poste* for us for the 3d or 4th of October, the only days for which places in the *malle-poste* were not already engaged up to the end of next month. This morning we have visited, with Mr and Mrs Cobden and a French lady, the old castle here at Pau in which Henry II. was born. We saw the large tortoise-shell cradle which was used for him when a baby, and many other interesting things of that time. The present king is fitting the old castle up again quite in the taste of the time of Henry IV. It is partly finished, and those rooms which are quite ready are now specially prepared for the Duc de Montpensier and his bride, the Spanish Princess, who are expected here after their marriage on their return to Paris about the 25th of next month, and will reside a few days at Pau. The view from the castle is beautiful. It is also remarkable that here two such good and great monarchs should have been born, and that both should have been obliged to change their religion for the sake of attaining the throne. Henry IV. had to turn Catholic, saying: 'Paris vaut bien une

messe'; and Bernadotte, who was the son of a poor saddler at Pau, turned Protestant to become King of Sweden. Mr Cobden is much courted here in France—strangers of the first rank call on him and Mrs Cobden and invite them. To-day the local paper contained a poetic panegyric on Mr Cobden.

BAYONNE,

Wednesday Evening, Sept. 30th, 1846.

It was really a pleasure to listen all day to such a man as Mr Cobden. He told us much about his interesting interviews with Louis Philippe, M. Thiers, etc. We passed some fine scenery, the high Pyrenees lying at a distance; and the laden fig trees, and the grapes growing in festoons along the road, added charms to the scene. Mr Schwabe enjoyed the dinner parties at the Ex-Maire's of Pau, and at Captain Rich's, at which he met most interesting people—the President of the Chamber of Commerce at Pau, etc. Much honour is always shown to Mr Cobden, the French seem really to be fond of him, and he made some very good speeches in their language. They wished to have a banquet for him at Pau, but he, in a polite manner, refused it.


BAYONNE, *Thursday, Oct. 1st, 1846.*

This evening we had some pleasant young men with us, sons of the Maire of Bayonne, who came to pay their respects to Mr Cobden. Mr Schwabe called, with Mr Cobden, on the English Consul, who was most kind and attentive in his behaviour towards Mr Cobden. Bayonne itself is a very nice place, in which everyone just now, however, thinks of nothing but the Duc de Montpensier, who arrived here this

morning on his journey to Madrid, where he is to be married on the 10th of October to the Spanish Princess. When we arrived last night with the carriage and four horses, a great many took us to be the Prince and his party, and it was amusing to see the people stare; several shouted aloud: 'Vive le Prince! vive le Prince!' and we, of course, bowing with dignity, returned thanks.

MADRID, 8th Oct. 1846.

Irun is the name of the town where we took our first Spanish dinner, and where we passed the Spanish Custom House; since then we have been three times annoyed by being detained and having our luggage examined, once in entering St Sebastian, again on leaving the Basque Provinces, and our things were examined a third time on entering Madrid. The Custom-House officers are all very polite, but you may easily imagine that Mr Cobden was not much pleased with such proceedings, he who wishes so much that all countries should have entire free and brotherly exchange of goods. Notwithstanding the many custom houses, there is, however, I believe, not a country where more smuggling goes on; smuggling is considered no disgrace, rich and poor do it here; traders pass from France by a cross road, and smuggle goods across the high mountains on mules; sometimes they are, however, caught, and have to pay penalties; but, as I said before, it is not considered a disgrace. On entering Spain Mr Schwabe recognised directly, in a servant's dress, one of his own prints, and here, in the hotel, we have Sheffield knives on the table, which, of course, must have been smuggled, as the introduction of English prints and knives is entirely prohibited in Spain.



MADRID, 8th October 1846.

The hour we passed in the boat going down the coast to St Sebastian was very pleasant; the view of the Pyrenees on all sides was very fine, and we were accompanied in the boat by a band of music, principally amateurs, who were sent from St Sebastian to one of the places where the Duc de Montpensier changed horses on his route to Madrid in order to welcome the Duc.

The young Spanish musicians, who had almost all intelligent faces, played all the time for us on their return to St Sebastian, but principally melancholy melodies, and told us (some of them spoke French very well) that they chose these melancholy tunes to show their dissatisfaction at the Spanish Princess marrying the Duc de Montpensier, whom they merely welcomed because the magistrates requested them to do so; we perceive everywhere that there is a great antipathy between the French and Spanish nations.

9th Oct. 1846.

Yesterday it became too late to dispatch this letter, and I must now hurriedly add that Mr Cobden and Mr Schwabe are invited to-morrow to Mr Bulwer's, the English Minister, and that the gentlemen, Mrs Cobden and myself are invited to dinner on Sunday next.

Malle-poste travelling is better than we expected, though two nights of it was a little fatiguing.

Mrs Cobden just reminds me that I must not forget to tell my fireside travellers that from Burgos to Madrid we were accompanied by a soldier, who had four loaded guns with him for our protection, in case we should meet banditti.

MADRID, 10th of October 1846.

This morning we visited the Museum, and I was never so enchanted with any collection of the kind—in fact, the Museum alone is worth a journey to Madrid. Instead of seeking treasures of art, in whatever direction the eye may turn, it is constantly resting on *chefs d'œuvre* of the splendid Spanish school—Murillo, Velasquez and others, and on pearls of art by the great Italian masters, Raphael, Titian, Giovanni Bellini, etc. There are also some very fine pictures by Claude Lorraine, and salons filled with the fine works of the German, Flemish and French schools. Rubens and Vandyke appear in full glory; but, in fact, there are so many precious productions of various great masters that it is impossible to name them all. In the afternoon we visited the Botanical Gardens, a large piece of ground with splendid old trees of every description, and many arbours and avenues of grapes; but the whole garden looks neglected, and, as is so often the case in Spain, one also finds here its rich and fertile soil unassisted by art, and suffering from neglect.

Oct. 12, 1846.

We witnessed this morning in church the marriage of the Queen of Spain with her cousin, and that of her sister the Princess with the Duc de Montpensier. Yesterday morning at breakfast the Prime Minister of Spain, Mr Istariz, to whom Mr Cobden had a letter of introduction, sent us four tickets of admission to witness the ceremony at the church. We had to appear quite *en toilette d'Espagne*, in black veils. We drove to church at eleven o'clock, and the marriage took place at one. We had excellent places, not twenty yards from the Queen and all the bridal party, so that we had a

clear view of the whole ceremony, which was different from anything I had seen before. At first the priest, who was in splendid robes, and had a sort of crown on his head, performed a Roman Catholic service, reading the Mass, diffusing incense, etc. Then the Queen and her sister were bound each together with her intended. The Queen-Dowager Christine performed this office. She put a white scarf embroidered with gold around the Queen and her intended. The head of the former was covered with it, but the latter was only covered as far as the neck, his head just peeping out. Both were kneeling at the time. The Queen-Dowager did the same to the Duc de Montpensier and the Infanta, tying a white satin riband several times around the scarf, and binding each couple together. Both parties remained in this way kneeling for about a quarter of an hour, whilst the priest read some prayers in Latin.

The white satin riband, I was told, is, after the ceremony, cut up and distributed among the relations and friends, like the bridecake in England. The Queen's dress was white, richly embroidered with gold and silver; she had a diamond crown on her head, and a great many diamond ornaments besides. The two brides had white trains to their dresses, but the Queen-Mother wore a white dress and a scarlet velvet train. I was much pleased with the appearance of the Queen, who has a kind, intelligent face, but is rather stout. She drove in a glass carriage, and as she waited for at least a quarter of an hour before it could move, I saw her very well; she is very friendly. People went up to the carriage and bowed to her, and she in return always saluted them kindly. I also received a very friendly bow from her. In leaving the

church the Queen drove in a carriage with her young husband, Francisco; the Queen-Mother drove in a carriage by herself, and the Infanta with the Duc de Montpensier. In some of the streets a great many soldiers were posted, on foot and on horseback, the whole was a fine sight, and after having seen the Queen and her party in their carriages waiting before the church door, we managed to drive away, and succeeded in getting a place in the principal street, where we could see the whole procession. It was nearly four o'clock when we reached home, and I had only time to enjoy reading the dear letters I found at the hotel on my return, before Mrs Cobden and myself had to begin dressing for the dinner party at the English Minister's.

Oct. 13th, 1846.

We all were much pleased with the entertainment and the people we met. Mr Bulwer, who was very polite, is still a bachelor. He took an American lady, the wife of the Brazilian Minister, to dinner. Mrs Cobden sat opposite to him, and was taken to dinner by Lord Foley. I was much pleased that Mr Cobden, who was evidently, by the attention shown him, considered by all as the king of the party, took me to dinner, and I was most pleasantly situated between Mr Cobden and the Brazilian Minister. The latter is also a very interesting man. I had to converse in French as he does not know much English. I received a good deal of information from him about the Brazilian Empire, Spain, etc. He told me that he had studied for three years in Germany at Göttingen. He has also been in Hamburg, and mentioned several names well known to me, and altogether I enjoyed his con-

versation. The Minister of the United States and his wife were also there. Mr Schwabe considered the former a clever man, and I took a great fancy to the lady. It was also a great pleasure to me after dinner to converse for a long time in German. Lord Foley and Mr Fortescue must have heard that I was a German, and they were kind enough to address me in that language. Both are ardent admirers of Mr Cobden, being quite of his politics. The Spaniards seem to be pleased with Mr Cobden's visit to Spain. There are constantly people calling, and the newspapers speak very favourably of him. To-morrow a party of Free-leaders give a banquet to him, to which Mr Schwabe has also received an invitation.

III.

EXTRACTS from Articles in the Madrid Papers
of October 1846 on Mr Cobden.

Mr R. Cobden has just arrived in this capital—the celebrated chief of the English league against corn laws. His signal triumph has changed the mercantile policy of all the world, and opened a broad field of commerce for our Spanish corn, and he is now to make acquaintance with a country which attracts the attention of Europe. The Spanish people, hospitable and grateful, cannot do less than

join us in giving welcome to the celebrated man who succeeded in making fraternal principles victorious amongst all the nations of the globe!

Let not the obstinate defenders of Monopoly, still only too powerful amongst us, fancy that Mr Cobden is come to Spain to proclaim a crusade against our tariffs. The great champion of Free Trade, the first statesman who rose to represent the working classes in England, travels on the Continent to re-establish his health, injured by the fatigue of a long and glorious struggle of seven years. During his sojourn in France, Mr Cobden was the object of the greatest demonstrations of sympathy, and even enthusiasm, on the part of the Economists and other persons who espouse the doctrines of commercial liberty. But though, unfortunately, this class is not so numerous in Spain as to justify the hope that they could, by themselves, render to this illustrious traveller all the honours he deserves, we trust that men of every opinion and every party will do nothing to cause a comparison to be drawn as regards the hospitality of this country and that of others, which might prove unfavourable to Spain.

IV.

MR COBDEN'S SPEECH at the Free Trade Banquet
at Madrid. 14th October 1846.

GENTLEMEN,—I accept with the deepest gratitude this demonstration. I accept it as a proof of your approbation of the principles of Free Trade, and of the means by which the Free-traders of England obtained their victory. We advocated commercial liberty, not in the spirit of a political party, nor for the benefit of a particular class, but for the interests of the whole community, and we effected our object solely by such moral means, as all good men in every country will, I hope, be able to approve. From the commencement to the close of our struggle, we renounced all resort to physical force, and trusted solely to the power of reason and argument. The sharpest weapon we wielded was the pen, and our loudest artillery was the voice of the orator. We never sought to *slay* an opponent, but only to *convert* him. It is true we made many prisoners, but they were the willing captives of conviction. For seven years a civil contest was waged in the midst of twenty-seven millions of people without shedding a drop of blood. The battle was long and arduous; but a victory achieved by discussion is in no danger from a re-action. Once gained, it is gained for ever.

You are probably all aware of the precise object of our Free Trade struggle in England. A great

principle was at stake. We claimed for every Englishman the right of freely exchanging the produce of his industry for the productions of every quarter of the globe. We demanded the removal of all protective custom duties. We said to our Government: 'Make your Custom-House officers the collectors of revenue for the public Treasury, and nothing more; do not make them protectors of this or that industry, at the expense of the rest of the community, and, above all, do not make them subservient to the smuggler.' We applied this principle with even-handed justice to all classes. We claimed for the British manufacturers the right of buying the corn, the cattle and the wool of Spain, on the same terms as the like productions of our own soil. We proposed to levy equal duties upon the sugars of Cuba and Jamaica. We demanded also for the agriculturists the right of buying every article of manufacture from foreigners on the same terms as from the British manufacturers. This is now the triumphant policy of the English people. Gentlemen, Free Trade is not the cause of one country alone, it is the cause of every people which is alive to the interests of civilisation and humanity; and where ought I to expect to find a sympathy for our principles, if not in this enlightened centre of the Peninsula? To no country does Free Trade offer greater advantages than to this, for nowhere has Nature been more bountiful in bestowing a superabundance of those productions which other nations desire to obtain in return for the produce of their skill and industry. But, I need not tell you, that commerce is nothing but an exchange of equivalents, and that a nation must consent to import, or it cannot export. I know that there are individuals to be found in every country, who say, 'We will

Mr Cobden's Speech at the Free Trade Banquet 15

produce everything we require within our own boundaries ; we will be independent of foreigners.' If Nature had intended that there should be such a natural isolation, she would have formed the earth upon a very different plan, and given to each country every advantage of soil and climate. My country, for example, would have possessed the wines, oils, fruits and silks, which have been denied to it, and other countries would have been endowed with the abundance of coal and iron with which we are compensated for the want of a warmer soil. No, Providence has wisely given to each latitude its peculiar productions, in order that different nations may supply each other with the conveniences and comforts of life, and that thus they may be united together in the bonds of peace and brotherhood. Gentlemen, I doubt not that ere long the public opinion of this great nation will emancipate its commerce from those restrictions which recently fettered the industry of my country. I remember that more than three centuries ago a great man sailed from your shores to discover a new hemisphere. Let me not be accused of undervaluing the glory of that great achievement if I say, that the statesman who gives to Spain the blessings of commercial freedom will, in my opinion, confer greater and more durable advantages upon his country than it derived from the discovery of America. The genius of Columbus gave to your ancestors an uncultivated continent, thinly peopled by a barbarous race, but Free Trade will throw open a civilised world to your enterprises, and every nation will hasten to bring you the varied products of their ingenuity and industry to be offered in exchange for the superabundant produce of your favoured and beautiful country. In conclusion (said Mr

Cobden in Spanish), I drink to the univereal success of Free Trade, the surest guarantee of the peace of nations.

V.

Mrs SALIS SCHWABE, from Spain to her
Friends in England. 1846.

MADRID, *the 16th of Oct.* 1846.

Mrs Cobden and I have just returned from a bull fight; our gentlemen are still there, but we could not stand it longer than for half an hour. Oh, never did I feel more excited and disgusted than with the Spanish spectacle of a bull fight! It is indeed painful to see sports of this kind in the nineteenth century. I am thoroughly grieved to see Europeans still enjoy scenes which remind one of *auto-da-fés*. During the half hour that we were present at this Spanish festivity—where queens, princes and all the nobility of Madrid presided—two bulls were killed, several fine horses fell as victims, and two men were much hurt; but I will not try your feelings by giving you an exact description. Be it enough, the sight was awful; but my heart was inclined to pity the beasts more than the men who fell as victims, for the latter possessed reason enough to know better; but the poor horses were brought blindfolded to the battlefield, and

the bulls made furious by being kept beforehand twelve hours without food. I can now easily comprehend all the cruel scenes of civil war which have taken place in Spain; these very bull fights suffice to make men indifferent at least to bloody scenes, and hold human life cheap. The arena is in a large square, surrounded by fine houses with balconies, and below them is a gallery of seats, which, as well as the balconies, were all filled; between 40,000 and 50,000 people were present. The Royal Family, which included the two newly-married couples, the Queen with her Consort Francisco, the Duke and Duchess of Montpensier and the Queen-Dowager Christine, sat opposite us on a balcony, which was decorated for them. They seemed to be quite accustomed to the spectacle and to enjoy it; the Queens always stay to the last; the bull-fighters are even presented to the Queen before the combat begins. At first three noblemen are engaged in the fight, and they drive into the square in most splendidly decorated equipages, under the balcony of the Queen, where they get out and are presented. The whole is at first a very grand sight; all is as festive as in former times of chivalry, when noble chevaliers fought at tournaments—nay, he who sees all the preparations and the party of well-dressed ladies and gentlemen, can at first scarcely believe that all have assembled merely to witness such inhuman sport. What made me still more disgusted was to see even the clergy present—for the Patriarch, the first Bishop, the one who married the Queen, sat just opposite us; and our gentlemen, who have just returned home, tell us he remained to the last! To-morrow and the day after, bull fights will take place. To-morrow the Queen will again preside; but we, of course, though we have

places, will take good care not to go. It was the first bull fight we have seen, and will, I am sure, be the last.

MADRID, 18th October 1846.

This afternoon several deputies called on Mr Cobden, and I heard some interesting speeches. The Spaniards seem to be intelligent men, but I pity them; they want freedom of mind, and the press is still under strong control. One party of deputies, first-rate men, delivered to Mr Cobden a letter and a most flattering testimonial. I forgot to name that on Friday morning we went with a clever gentleman, Mr Kelly (a Spaniard, whose parents were Irish), to the Royal Armory, which is considered one of the finest in the world. It contains weapons of all kinds and all nations, and there is still much of what the Moors left behind them. Yesterday morning Mr Kelly accompanied us to the Museum, where we spent a few delightful hours. It was very interesting to me to meet Alexandre Dumas there; he has been sent to Madrid by the Minister at Paris to give a historical account of the Duc de Montpensier's marriage to the Infanta.

MADRID, 22d October, Thursday.

Yesterday evening, whilst Mr Cobden and Mr Schwabe were dining again at Mr Bulwer's, the English Minister, we ladies had arranged to converse during the quiet evening with our absent friends, but at about eight o'clock I received a note from Mr Schwabe, in which he said that the Queen and the Royal Family were at the theatre,—no tickets, of course, were to be had, but that Mr Bulwer was kind enough to offer two seats for us

in his box, and another gentleman had offered two seats in his box for Mr Cobden and himself. At half-past nine we arrived at the well-filled theatre, where Mrs Cobden and myself found excellent seats just opposite the Queen and her Consort, and the Duc and Duchesse de Montpensier. Mr Bulwer was not at the theatre, but we met the Countess de Chicala, with some other ladies in the box, who were exceedingly kind to us. The Countess spoke good English as well as French, and pointed out to us all that was worth noting. The Queen was with her party in a private box near the stage, and was dressed in a very simple manner—white satin made in a blouse high up to the neck, and a net cap with a rose on one side. She wore scarcely any ornaments, but still looked very nice. The Duchesse de Montpensier was dressed in pink satin, made high to the neck, and had a very simple cap on her head.

The entertainment at the theatre consisted merely of a ballet, which was, however, well performed, and the Queen seemed particularly to enjoy it. The Duc de Montpensier applauded, and the Queen nodded several times to the first *danseuse*.

On Monday morning we drove, as we had intended, to the Escorial, one of the most colossal buildings I ever saw, and, though founded by Philip II. in the sixteenth century, it looks now like a new and modern building. We had the pleasure of meeting Alexandre Dumas there, who had a private order to see the palace of the Escorial, and he was kind enough to offer to take us with him through the palace, a pleasure we should otherwise have missed, as we did not know it required a private order to see it, and we had, therefore, come without one. The library abounds in Arabic books, and

the walls of the palace are richly ornamented with Gobelins.

This morning the Duc and Duchesse de Montpensier left for France. The Queen and her sister shed many tears at parting, so at least the general account says.

This evening, at nine o'clock, we returned home from a dinner-party at the O'Shea's, one of the first bankers here. Their establishment is princely; they are much at Court, and are at all the Queen's large parties. They wished to take us to the ball at the French Embassy, but we had seen all the great personages we wished to see.

Mr Cobden and Mr Schwabe met at Mr Bulwer's a Spanish gentleman, Mr Salamanca, who has a country seat at Aranjuez, who made them promise that, though he and his wife could not well leave Madrid at present, we would still make his house at Aranjuez our own. He had plenty of servants there to whom he could write for our reception, etc.

ARANJUEZ, 24th October 1846.

Yesterday morning we arrived at this beautiful place, which has an increased interest to me from its connection with Schiller's immortal *Don Carlos*. We are staying at Mr Salamanca's house, which is very fine, and, after having lived for some time in hotels, our present residence appears like fairyland. When we arrived yesterday, we found a luxurious *déjeuner à la fourchette* awaiting us, and at seven o'clock a dinner, with all sorts of wine, was prepared. We have constantly two or three men-servants at our command, and yesterday evening there were at least twenty fine rooms lighted up for us. It is delightful to be here alone, and surrounded by servants who

are so anxious to be civil and obliging that we feel quite at our ease. Our reception is a great display of Spanish hospitality. It is curious that at Aranjuez there is a fine palace without a garden, while at Madrid there is a fine garden without a palace. This evening at nine o'clock the diligence will pass here which will take us to Seville, and in which we shall have four nights' travelling.

SEVILLE, 28th Oct. 1846.

Mr Cobden, while the horses were being changed on the road between Cordova and Seville, walked on and gathered some sweet-smelling little flowers and some very handsome shrubs for me; but though Nature yields so much, men neglect everything, and I would have given much could I have carried some of the fertile land with me to produce corn in Ireland for the poor inhabitants, whilst here it lies waste. Whilst Mr Cobden walked yesterday morning, he met a man in the road from whom he bought three pomegranates for a halfpenny, and if he would have given himself the trouble, he might have plucked some off the trees, as they are left for the birds. I never saw so rich a country. For twenty and thirty miles we drove through nothing but olive groves, and when we came nearer to Seville we passed several orange and lemon groves, and involuntarily I am always reminded of the old adage that, when Jehovah asked all nations what they still wished for to complete their happiness, the Spaniard answered,—“Good laws and a judicious government;” upon which the High Judge said,—“No, that cannot be; for then you will have everything.” I am really grieved to see, in a country where Heaven has been so generous, how miserable people are still, and how much behind other nations as far as comfort and in-

telligence go. Even the Spanish character, as far as nature has to do with it, is favourable; they seem to have a great deal of natural kindness. As far as I have experienced, I find the lower classes very obliging and good-natured, and the Spanish heads and faces look very intelligent; but still you meet but few educated minds, and a great taste for cruel sports. Government has, however, as yet not done much for education and science, but encourages bull fights and sports of that kind; and the people, perhaps also relaxed by the climate, have not energy enough to exercise their good natural gifts, but sigh and find fault with everything around them, without trying to amend it.

SEVILLE, 29th Oct. 1846.

This morning we ladies received several visitors, whilst Mr Cobden and Mr Schwabe were gone out to make calls.

The Portuguese Consul, Mr Prats, and several other gentlemen called, and entertained us very agreeably. At one o'clock, after our gentlemen had returned, a deputation of the admirers of Free Trade called, and on Monday next a banquet will be given by them to Mr Cobden, to which, of course, Mr Schwabe is also invited. Amongst others, Captain General Shilly, a Spaniard, the Governor of Andalusia, called. On Sunday next we shall all dine with him.

SEVILLE, 2d Nov. 1846.

I now wish you to accompany me (Sunday morning, three o'clock) to the really sublime Cathedral, which this morning had something unusually solemn about it, owing to the preparations which had been made, and all the incense which was diffused in

remembrance of an earthquake which took place in the year 1755, when Lisbon was buried; but though the concussion was strongly felt here at the time, this town was graciously preserved, the earth shook but did not open.

I first heard High Mass, which was accompanied by excellent music on the organ, after that a procession of the priests and magistrates took place, the former appearing in their richest dresses. The whole was a solemn inspiring sight, and the feeling was increased by the number of figures in black, kneeling to offer their praise to the Almighty.

On Sunday evening at seven o'clock we dined with the Captain General, whose wife, only eighteen years old, we thought very handsome and amiable. We met Lord Foley, Mr Fortescue, Colonel Waugh (the son-in-law of Mr O'Shea at Madrid), Mr Murphy, a Spanish gentleman, whose father was an Irishman, and Mr Murphy's sister-in-law, an old Spanish lady. I sat at dinner between the Captain General and Colonel Waugh; the latter took me in to dinner. I enjoyed the party much, and was particularly pleased with Madame de Shilly, who, after dinner, entertained us most pleasantly with some Andalusian songs. She has a splendid voice, and sings most beautifully.

Friday Morning the 6th November 1846,

ON THE GUADALQUIVER,
ON BOARD THE STEAMER FROM SEVILLE TO CADIZ.

Now, let us return to Seville, and so be systematic. I will begin with Tuesday morning, when a Mr Pickman, an Englishman, who has an immense pottery in the neighbourhood of Seville, placed a carriage at our disposal. We first spent a few hours at the Cathedral, saw then a part of the

interesting Moorish Castle, the Alcazar, and at twelve o'clock we drove to the Cartuja, an old convent, which is turned into the pottery, and is in Mr Pickman's possession. There are a good many Englishmen employed, and when we arrived all the workmen were placed in the entrance, and gave a loud cheer for Mr Cobden. We went through the pottery, which was a most interesting sight, and saw the whole process of manufacture. On the doors of some of the inner buildings of the manufactory was written in large letters, 'Mr Cobden for ever.'

I think you are now pretty well *d jour* with our proceedings at Seville, except that I forgot to give you an account of the banquet on Monday last. The dinner went off pretty well, and I will send you the paper which contains an account of it and Mr Cobden's speech.

V I.

Mr COBDEN at Seville.

(From the *Times*, November 1846.)

'Quien no ha visto Sevilla
No ha visto maravilla.'

But a visitor at Seville during this present month might have seen a greater marvel than Moorish arcades or Gothic louvres — than the

grand cathedral or the quaint giralda. He might have seen the proud citizens of the Andalusian capital assembled to do honour to an English cotton-factor; he might have seen the jealous and exclusive Spaniard listening with acquiescence and applause to sentiments delivered by a strange merchant, tending to conciliate and equalise the inhabitants and produce of all the countries of the earth; and in the very city which was the model and miracle of ancient monopoly, and which claimed and kept for its favoured quays the entire commerce of a new world, he might have heard doctrines propounded and approved, establishing both the justice and expediency of Free Trade and unrestricted intercourse between all the people of the universe, from Canton to Cadiz. Our readers perhaps noticed a paragraph in our last impression describing the reception given to Mr Cobden at Seville, where he was bidden to a banquet by the merchants, landowners and functionaries of the city, and his services to civilisation acknowledged in a panegyrical oration, which bespoke and anticipated the application of his ideas to the economical state of Spain.

Columbus was hardly more notably honoured for giving a new world to Castile and Leon.

Mr Cobden's world has not yet been seen, but he has demonstrated its existence and treasures to the conviction of millions. We have no doubt of the issue of the voyage on which we are embarked, or of the truth of that proposition which thus commands such instinctive assent. But if futurity should prove that Free Trade is a fallacy, and protection a righteous doctrine, if we have to confess the vanity of our wishes, and to de-


plore the failure of our experiment, we can at least say that we made a bold endeavour for universal good, and that half Europe applauded our enterprise and shared in our error.

VII.

FREE TRADE BANQUET at Seville, with Mr COBDEN'S
SPEECH. *2d November 1846.*

(From *The Manchester Guardian.*)

Several merchants, landowners and public functionaries gave a banquet to Mr Cobden at Seville on the 2d November 1846. The chair was taken by Signor Miguel Chacon y Duran, Director of the Economical Society of Seville, several members of which were present. Señor Chacon proposed the toast of 'Mr Cobden, and the application of his ideas to the Economical State of Spain.' Mr Cobden replied to the following effect, in English, which was translated by Señor Alberto Prats y Soler:— 'Gentlemen,—I return you my most sincere thanks for the kind reception which you have given me in the beautiful capital of Andalusia. I am aware that, personally, I am not entitled to the consideration with which you so generously treat me. I have, however, had the pleasing satisfaction of finding at Seville a great number of enlightened individuals who share those principles of which I have sought to be the interpreter. As I have already



thanked you for the expression of your kindness, scarcely anything remains for me to say. If I had been a Spaniard, I should have given you the trouble of listening to a long speech. I should have endeavoured to show that Free Trade would confer the greatest benefits on this country; that it would cause activity in your ports and markets; that it would enrich your agriculture; and that it would render your finances prosperous. I should have inculcated the moral advantages which result from the mutual communication of nations. I could have drawn you a very lively picture of the pacific benefits which would ensue from the general adoption of the principles of Free Trade. I could have demonstrated to you that nations, greatly differing from each other, if it were possible for them to communicate their ideas, laying aside their mutual prejudices, would gain extraordinarily by the acquisition of information which would be useful to the country, and would increase its enlightenment. I should enlarge with pleasure on these principles were I a Spaniard, but, as an Englishman, I think it more delicate to leave the defence of them to Spaniards, in order that I may not be blamed for seeking to propagate, beyond my own country, doctrines of which the advantages are sufficiently known. I believe, however, that in this enlightened assembly there are persons who, with the eloquence natural to their nation, will know how to defend successfully those principles of humanity and philanthropy upon which it is not allowable for me to expatiate. I am glad that, after I have communicated my sentiments to you, you will respond to them by showing how my doctrines may be applied to your country, which it is not for me to explain. In conclusion, I would wish to propose a toast in

favour of Andalusia, but I experience a difficulty in finding one in a country privileged by nature, and abounding in every kind of produce. What can I desire for this country? A single thing is wanting to double its wealth—freedom of trade. Let us drink to its attainment.'

This speech was followed by another, no less important, which was delivered in French by Mr Salis Schwabe, of which the following is a translation :—

'I acknowledge sincerely the honour you have done me on this occasion by your cordial reception. Although French is a foreign language to me, I use it now because it will probably be understood by most of you, although I, unfortunately, do not understand Castilian. I perceive, in the honour you have done me, a new evidence of your decision on the great question of Free Trade. Until this day, my name must have been entirely unknown to you ; but, by the side of my distinguished friend Mr Cobden, you will not doubt my sentiments. I will not conceal from you that I participate, if not in his talents and his fame, at least in a lively desire to see Free Trade extending itself on every side. This is not the cause of an individual, or of a single nation, but of all the nations of the globe. Once established in all countries, it will produce perpetual peace, the greatest earthly blessing which the human race can enjoy. But no nation in the world will enjoy this advantage more quickly than yours. Your fruitful soil produces all that many other countries need, and you will very easily seek abroad for those things which you want, and which other nations produce more abundantly than you. I have no doubt you will agree with me in the belief that the wealth of a country is not measured

so much by its exportations as by its importations ; and upon these the curse of restrictions, in this country as in others, must necessarily fall. Your manufacturers flatter themselves that they are protected : this is an error. The smuggler enters into competition with them, and will always beat them. They live on in fatal ignorance, because they are ignorant, probably, of what is doing elsewhere. I trust the day is not distant when you will see the most extensive and influential of your manufacturers uniting themselves with you ; and everyone will understand that the principle acted upon in England is the true one—not to allow any impost which has for its object the protection of one interest at the expense of every other, but to lay on a moderate duty only, as a contribution to the income and expenses of the country. This will be a real protection to your manufacturers, and with this your finances will prosper ; happiness will extend in every direction ; you will increase your means of communication, and there will not be a single class in Spain which will not reap a rich reward. In conclusion, I entreat you, gentlemen, to drink with me,—“Free Trade among all the nations of the earth.”

VIII.

Mrs SALIS SCHWABE, from Cadiz, to her Friends
in England. *November 1846.*

CADIZ, *November 10th, 1846.*

On Monday last the grand banquet of the Cadiz Free-traders took place, at which Mr Cobden was received with much enthusiasm. They drank his health no less than four times. But you will be astonished to hear that Mr Schwabe was so roused by the pleasant party that he also became one of the orators; he addressed the party in French, a language which was understood by all who were present, and I understand he was much cheered. Mr Cobden was again kind enough to give me the original of his excellent speech; and as I know you will all feel pleasure in reading it, I will forward it with a copy of the Spanish newspaper.

IX.

FREE TRADE BANQUET at Cadiz, with Mr COBDEN'S
SPEECH.

(Translated from the *Comercio* of Cadiz.)

9th Nov. 1846.

The banquet was prepared in one of the beautiful saloons of the Casino, given up for the purpose by

the society of the establishment. The table was adorned with fine flowers, and covered with rich dishes and a profusion of fruits and sweetmeats.

At half-past five p.m., Mr Cobden arrived, accompanied by his friend and fellow-traveller, Mr Salis Schwabe, of Manchester, and by Don Jorge Urtetegui, a respectable merchant, and a friend of the great English League leader. The latter, we learn, was the first to conceive the idea of giving to Mr Cobden, in this *fête*, a proof of the lively sympathies entertained for his doctrines in Spain.

At six o'clock the festival commenced. Don Jorge Urtetegui presided, supported by Mr Cobden on his right, and Don Jose Maria Elizalde on his left. There were altogether forty-four persons present, all gentlemen of high standing in society, and, for the most part, interested in commerce.

The President rose and said:—Gentleman,—I am about to propose a toast, which I am sure you will all drink with much pleasure; it is the health of the illustrious guest who this day honours this table by his presence — ‘Mr Richard Cobden. May Heaven prolong his life, so as to enable him to behold the complete triumph of his sound doctrines throughout Europe, as he has already done in England!’

Mr Cobden then rose and replied as follows:—

Gentlemen,—I regret that I cannot express my gratitude for this kind reception in a language which is intelligible to all present. It gives me no surprise, however, to find that the commercial principles which I have advocated in England should find admirers in Cadiz; it is to those *principles*, and not to their unworthy *advocates*, that we have now met to do honour. Gentlemen, the English Free-traders have had but one object

in view, and it may be expressed in one word—*Liberty*. We found our commerce subject to a thousand restraints. The Legislature was everywhere thwarting the operations of individuals—our merchants and manufacturers carried their enterprise into every corner of the globe, but, on their return home with the productions of foreign countries, they were repulsed from their native shores by absurd and illiberal tariffs. It was to put an end to this interference with the right of individuals that the English League was formed. We resolved to restrain the functions of our Legislature within their proper limits, by withdrawing from it altogether the power of regulating or protecting commerce, and leaving every individual free to exercise his industry in whatever way he pleased. This was the object of the League, which it accomplished after a struggle of seven years. Henceforth no merchant in England can be thwarted in his undertakings by the Government, under the pretence of protecting the interests of some other man at home or in the Colonies. Every individual is placed upon the equal ground of freedom, but no one has any privilege over his fellow-citizen. I need not say a word to convince you how favourable *liberty* is to commerce. All history proves it—compare the different nations of the world at the present time with each other, and you will find that everywhere commerce flourishes or fades in proportion to the liberty or the restraint which it encounters—compare even a seaport which is free with another that is not, and see the great difference. You all remember that for a year Cadiz enjoyed an extraordinary prosperity. You remember the fleet of vessels which crowded your bay, the vast traffic which filled your streets, and your warehouses

charged with the productions of every clime? What was it that occasioned such a magical change in Cadiz? The climate, its harbour, its productions, everything was the same as they had been before—there was but one alteration which accounted for all the prosperity—for one year Cadiz was a FREE port. In every country there is some particular interest which is afraid of freedom. In England, our agriculturists were frightened out of their senses at the prospect of Free Trade in corn. But they now laugh at their former terrors. In Spain, you have the Catalonians, who are terrified at the mere name of Free Trade. They will live to laugh at their present fear like my own opponents the farmers of England. I never knew an industry suffer from freedom. I have known many trades perish under the enervating shade of protection, but never one which failed to gain strength in the invigorating breeze of liberty. Gentlemen, if you think that Spain would be benefited by adopting the policy which now prevails in England, you must follow similar means to those which were pursued for advancing Free Trade opinions. You must promote the discussion of the subject in every possible way. Each man who is convinced of the truth of our principles must make it his duty to convert his neighbours. It is only by individual efforts and sacrifices that great truths, whether in religion, philosophy or politics, can be propagated. It is useless to expect Free Trade measures from your Government until the people have been convinced of its advantages. In my opinion, almost all the Governments in Europe are in advance of their people in intelligence upon economical questions, and they are only waiting for the removal of public ignorance and prejudice to advance in the path of

commercial freedom. I see many gentlemen round this table who, I am sure, will devote themselves to the patriotic task of propagating sound economical doctrines, and I assure them that, however far I may be removed from them, I shall always take a lively interest in their labours. In conclusion, I drink prosperity to the ancient city of Cadiz.

X.

Mrs SALIS SCHWABE, from Spain, to her Friends
in England. *November and December 1846.*

CADIZ, *Nov. 12th 1846.*

On Wednesday morning at nine o'clock, according to Mr Haurie's invitation, we went by steamer to Port St Mary, a passage of about forty minutes across the Bay of Cadiz. When the boat arrived, Mr Haurie was already waiting for us, to show us a large wine vault at Port St Mary, and then to take us to Xerez. He was on horseback, but a beautiful carriage with three horses, coachman and footman, which belonged to the Maire of Port St Mary, was waiting for us. The latter gentleman is also a great Free-trader. We had yesterday a most beautiful day, with a clear sky and brilliant sun.

Instead of driving direct to Xerez, Mr Haurie, who speaks English and French with equal facility, took us first to an orange grove, where we saw laden orange trees and asparagus growing wild in

the open air. The hedges of nearly all the fields we passed on the way to Xerez were formed of gigantic cactus plants and aloes, cultivated by nature alone; man, as I have already remarked, does nothing here to increase nature's gifts. After plucking and eating some oranges, and wishing that all of you, who, perhaps, were then crowding round the fire, could be with us, we drove to Catuga Convent, the largest and finest building of this description in Spain, which was formerly inhabited by but ten friars, who were enormously rich, but were suddenly turned out by the Government six or seven years ago, and their property, including some fine pictures, was confiscated and sold. The magnificent building, which bears still strong traces of grandeur and richness, now stands empty and forsaken. The exterior of the church has very rich carved work, and is surrounded by little gardens full of orange trees and beautiful flowers—each friar having formerly possessed a garden of his own.

It was four o'clock when we arrived at Xerez, where we were surprised by the princely mansion of our host. His beautiful wife, with whom we conversed in French, received us in the most friendly way, and had even prepared an English fireside for us, and everything was done that could promote our comfort. Soon after our arrival, Mr Haurie showed us the lions of Cadiz—the immense wine vaults. We went first to see a Mr Gordon, whose cellars are the largest in the place. He presented us with some pink and white roses and fine azaleas, which he had plucked in the open air in a pretty garden, annexed to the wine vaults. We then visited Mr Haurie's wine vaults, which are also very grand, and from thence went to see a vineyard where the grapes grow which produce sherry.

ON BOARD THE STEAMER 'THE ROYAL TAR,'
November 15th, Sunday Evening, 10 p.m.

This morning, at nine o'clock, the arrival of the English packet was announced. We began at once to pack our boxes, and at twelve o'clock we left with it for Gibraltar, which now lies before us beneath the mighty Rock, but does not open its fortified gates to let us enter. To-night we shall have to sleep on board the steamer. . . . Before leaving Cadiz we went to see the Casa de Misericordia, which is a refuge for poor men, women and children. It has about 1000 inmates. Of these about 400 are children, who are well fed, taught and clothed; the rest of the inmates are very old men and women who are not able to support themselves. The whole is an excellent establishment in a very fine building, and seems fairly well kept, though I saw some room for improvement. You will be surprised to hear that yesterday we spent a most pleasant day in the country. A young gentleman, Mr Tagle, offered us (as seems to be the fashion in Spain) the use of his country house. At ten o'clock our friend, Mr Urtetegui, came with Mr Tagle's fine carriage drawn by four horses richly caparisoned, and we drove to Chiclana, about thirteen English miles from Cadiz. It was a delightful drive, and gave us a better idea of the position of Cadiz. The tongue of land on which it is situated is almost an island, and it was a grand, almost awful, sight, as we crossed the narrow isthmus and drove for about ten minutes along a narrow carriage road, the waves of the great ocean rushing up to us on both sides. It was like driving through the sea; on one side was the ocean which separates Africa from us, and on the other side was the Bay of Cadiz. On the road we passed many heaps of salt obtained from

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the sea, which forms the principal trade of the people.

The sea water is drawn by canals into a number of small ponds, and in summer during the great heat the water evaporates and the salt remains.

GIBRALTAR, 17th Nov. 1846.

This evening Mr Cobden and Mr Schwabe were invited by Captain Walker, the Military Secretary, to dine with the officers at mess. Yesterday morning our, or rather Mr Cobden's, arrival here was soon known, for many callers came at once, and at two o'clock, after the first English post was despatched, we ascended the Rock, the ladies on donkeys and the gentlemen on horses. We were accompanied by Captain Walker and Mr Costello, the Attorney-General. The first day we did not see much of the splendid military defences, but we went to the highest point of the Rock, about 1500 feet above the sea, in order to enjoy the splendid view. For a moment I almost believed myself in Switzerland, after ascending a hill and beholding nothing but water surrounded by high hills, with little towns dotting the slopes.

The small bay of Gibraltar looks like a lake, and the lovely shores make one forget that it is a part of the wild ocean. On the other side the narrow straits of Gibraltar are seen, and another continent, that of Africa, not as a waste of desert sand, but with fine mountains rising out of the sea. A narrow gulf divides the lands of knowledge, liberty and civilisation from the untrodden regions of barbarous ignorance and slavery. Mountains, shores and fields look so much alike that it seems almost incredible that man, his laws, deeds and works can be so different, so opposed. Two towns in Africa can be plainly seen; one, just opposite the Gibraltar Rock—Tenda

—is also a fortification, but in the hands of the Spaniards—like Gibraltar, is in those of the English. Not far distant, the white walls of Tangiers rise against the dark mountains, and behind them lies the desert.

There are many Moors here, but not one Moorish lady. The Moors are the best looking among the foreigners, and are said to be the best behaved. The view from our window is very interesting. Every morning there is an auction in the open air, attended by all nations—Turks, Moors, Spaniards, etc. All languages are heard and all costumes seen in the streets, but all the different nations agree in one creed, that of the worship of Mammon.

This morning Captain Walker, a very agreeable and pleasant man, came again for us, and we all went on horseback to visit the excavated rocks, called the Galleries. A number of cannons have been put inside the rock, where a long passage has been excavated, and holes have been driven through to the exterior, so that they can fire in every direction. Of all the fortifications I have seen, this is the most secure and the most wonderful and grand work ; but it is a painful reflection that we still live in a time when so much money and labour is expended, merely to enable man to destroy man. However, I trust that liberty of commerce will soon unite all nations in such close brotherhood, that such works will only remain as monuments of art and of darker times, now of no longer use.

In going to the rock galleries we passed an old Moorish castle, said to be the oldest Moorish building in Spain, but which is still in perfect preservation. There are many convicts who work beneath the rock to make the fortifications still stronger. The convicts are well kept, it is said even better than the soldiers, and they look comfortable and

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content. Besides food and clothes, they receive a penny a day for tobacco, and another penny a day is put by for them, that they may have a small sum when their term of imprisonment has elapsed ; but what is all this without liberty ?

ON BOARD THE STEAMER 'BARCINO,'
OFF MALAGA, 19 Nov. 1846.

I have just awakened : find I have slept from Gibraltar to Malaga. As the gates of Gibraltar are closed at sunset, we were obliged to go on board at 5.30, though the boat only left at eight.

Yesterday morning, at nine o'clock, Mr Barr, a Scotch gentleman, came with a carriage for us, and we drove all along the base of the Rock as far as Europa Point, the most southern point of Europe. The drive round the Rock is really beautiful. When we were at the Europa Point we ascended a small tower, and from thence saw the Atlas Mountains in Africa rising into the clouds. On our return we were interested at seeing some large monkeys climbing about the Rock. At twelve we came home, and heard directly that the quarantine had been raised at Malaga, and that a good steamer, the *Barcino*, left in the evening for that town. We quickly made up our minds, paid a few hurried visits, packed our boxes, and were on board at 5.30.

GRANADA, Nov. 24, 1846.

On Saturday morning we left Malaga at six o'clock in a coach drawn by five horses, which we had hired for a week, and proceeded that day thirteen leagues on our journey to Granada. The road led over a mountain 6000 feet high, and we therefore enjoyed many fine views, but the roads, though leading to what is called the Prima Donna

of Andalusia, are simply awful. The Posadas, or wayside inns, are so bad that we had to take our dinner with us, but an able guide whom we took from Seville made us pretty comfortable on the road. It was twelve o'clock at night before we came to Zoja, a town amidst rocks, where we rested, and where the climate is such that but few houses have windows. Wooden shutters can be used to keep out the night air. We left Zoja at six o'clock next morning, and passed through rich valleys, and the Sierra Nevada soon appeared in the distance with its diadem of snow.

We reached Granada at eight o'clock in the evening, and found, for Spain, very comfortable quarters. Next morning Matteo, who calls himself a son of the Alhambra, came to act as *cicerone* to this enchanting place, where imagination and romance find a wide field. It is impossible to describe the Alhambra and its charming environs. Its sight creates a fulness of feeling which prevents speech, and in thinking of it my feelings are too warm for expression. I advise you to read Washington Irving's *Tales of the Alhambra*, which will give you a faithful picture of its former strength as a fortification before the French demolished it, as well as of its beauty and romantic history. It is grievous that men could destroy a place where the remains of former grandeur are still so enchanting.

To-day we heard the people at Malaga have united to give a dinner to Mr Cobden, which will take place on Monday next. I don't think Mr Cobden is overpleased with it, for we all wished to proceed on our journey. Mr Cobden left England in order to be quiet, but not to meet with so many public dinners.

BARCELONA, 11th Dec. '46.

After remaining sixteen hours in quarantine on board the steamer *La Ville de Madrid*, by which we came from Malaga, we were allowed by the Board of Health to land at nine o'clock this morning; and while Mrs Cobden and I were engaged with our news from home, the gentlemen delivered several letters of introduction and called upon the British Consul, Mr Penleaze, a nice old widower. Mr Cobden's amiable manners of persuasion have already had the effect that this evening one of the Barcelonian manufacturers, all of whom are anything but admirers of Free Trade, paid us a visit and very politely took us to his box at the Italian Opera, where we heard 'Montecchi and Capoletti,' or 'Romeo and Juliet' (the music is by Bellini) very well performed.

13th Dec. 1846. *Thursday Morning.*

This morning our gentlemen are gone to look at some manufactories, and we ladies are expecting Mr Penleaze, who kindly invited us to take a drive with him to a neighbouring farm of his, by which we should, at the same time, see a little of the environs of Barcelona.

MARMANDE, 19th Dec.

On Friday the French Consul at Barcelona, who, like all the French Consuls in different places, was very attentive to Mr Cobden, invited us, and we all spent a most pleasant evening. Directly after dinner, before we went to Mr Lesseps (the French Consul), an English gentleman, a friend of Mr Cobden's, came and took us to the Barcelona Exchange, a splendid building; and we saw in the upper rooms about a thousand boys and young men

who were taught gratis the arts of drawing, painting and of sculpture. The scholars are provided with paper, pencils, and whatever else may be required, and the poorest as well as the richest are admitted to the school, provided they attend regularly and there is nothing objectionable in their character. The school is open every evening from six to eight, and many a carpenter, painter or designer has there laid the foundations of future success.

Saturday morning the French Consul sent his carriage for us. The gentlemen first went to some prisons, which they found well kept, and then went with us to the Cathedral, a somewhat dark and dismal building, but possessing many relics of historical interest. . . . On Friday at four o'clock we entered the diligence, which was anything but an easy vehicle, and we were well shaken on the Spanish roads for the last time. We travelled all night, and by six o'clock on the following afternoon the snowy summits of the Pyrenees began to appear. Some of the little brooks had floating ice, and for the first time the landscape bore the stamp of winter. On Sunday evening at nine o'clock we arrived at Perpignan, and found everything prepared for our reception by our servants. I must confess I felt as if I came from another world—from America or Australia back to Europe—and not as if I came only from one neighbouring country to another. Spain is, after all, very different from anything I had seen, and though I have no great wish to return again soon to 'hungry Iberia' (as Murray calls it), yet I would not lose the recollection of this interesting journey for a great deal. Much seems to remain as in the time of Don Quixote; and, speaking of this, a Spanish gentleman told me a story which is so characteristic, that I must repeat it.

'Adam,' he said, 'came back to revisit this world, and went first to England, which, however, he said was quite unknown to him; in fact, that it was totally different to anything he had ever seen. Our universal ancestor then proceeded to France, which he thought much changed, although he could remember having seen it before. After France he visited Spain, and at once exclaimed,— 'Oh! here I feel at home; here I find everything exactly as I left it!' But now I must leave Spain in reality and proceed to describe our doings.

We left Perpignan on Wednesday morning for Narbonne, where we stayed one night, and on Thursday morning at eight o'clock I had the great grief of parting with our dear friends, Mr and Mrs Cobden. They proceeded towards the south on their way to Italy, while we turned our steps towards the north.

X I.

Mrs COBDEN to Mrs SALIS SCHWABE, with Mr
COBDEN'S SPEECH at Genoa. *January 1847.*

GENOA, *January 1847.*

Mr Cobden delivered the following speech at a dinner given him on Saturday, 16th inst. There were fifty-three persons present, the Consuls of England, France, Spain and Belgium, sitting side

by side like lambs. The party consisted chiefly of merchants, but included about half a dozen marquises, descendants of the ancient families of the place.

Mr Cobden's Speech at Genoa.

Gentlemen,—Let me beg you to accept my warmest thanks for this kind and hospitable reception, and, still more, let me thank you for the sympathy you have expressed for the principle with which my name has been associated. The Free-traders in England have only had one object in view, the removal of those restrictions which impede the progress of commercial intercourse between the different nations of the earth. We never entered upon the field of party politics; we abstained from all interference with the forms of government; we confined ourselves strictly to a question of economical science, which effects equally the prosperity and happiness of every nation, whatever be its forms of government—for where is there a government which is not interested in ruling over a rich, flourishing and contented people? We look for the progress of Free Trade in all countries, because it will promote alike the interests of the governors and governed. There is a great lesson to be learned by governments—a lesson as yet learned by but two nations—which will teach them how to increase their revenues by reducing their customs duty,—a process which augments the population, commerce and wealth of a nation, and thus increases its ability to contribute to the revenue of the State. I will give you a fact or two in illustration of what I mean. The United States of America enjoy probably the most moderate tariff in the world. In

that country nine-tenths of all the revenue is derived from the customs. In England, where for the last quarter of a century we have been marching in the path of Free Trade, one-third of our enormous income is yielded by the customs. In France, which has yet to take the first step in the reform of its tariff, one-tenth only of the taxes is raised from the customs; and in Spain, where the restrictive system reigns supreme, so small a fraction as one-thirteenth of the revenue is all that is raised at the custom house. If I were to take other countries, I could show that, in proportion as they depart from the principles of Free Trade, they diminish the resources of the Treasury. Seeing, then, that the interests of the Government and the people are identical in this matter, I feel confident in the extension of sound commercial principles everywhere.

I need not remind you, gentlemen, that the removal of commercial restrictions must promote the interests of Genoa. Nature has given you a deep and capacious port in a sea that is not famous for good harbours; your merchants possess capital and enterprise; your sailors have always been renowned for their courage, sobriety and perseverance. I do not forget that from amongst them sprung that great and daring genius who sailed upon the discovery of a new world. You have here the elements of commercial greatness, and require only free scope for your energies to achieve the highest prosperity for your beautiful city—a prosperity which will be desirable, because it is based upon principles of justice and humanity.'

XII.

Mrs COBDEN TO Mrs SCHWABE. *February 1847.*

ROME, ITALY, *February 1847.*

The reason I write so soon after my last letter is to give you a little information respecting a dinner which was given to my husband last Wednesday, and which you will be delighted to hear went off most admirably indeed. I scarcely recollect seeing him better pleased with anything than he was with the whole affair on that occasion. It was given entirely by Italians, which, of course, made it the more complimentary. I shall try and send you a paper with the full account of it, therefore I need not enter minutely into particulars. The editor of the Roman paper is a son of the celebrated Mrs Hemans, and is considered here a young man of considerable talent. The healths of the Pope and the Queen of England were drunk together as one toast!! Amongst the company was a celebrated Improvisatore, and in the course of the evening he delivered an improvisation upon Mr Cobden, the last verse of which drew forth tears from those around, and which, translated, conveys the following sentiment:—‘When you go back to England, say you found Italy a corpse, but upon it was planted a green branch, which will one day flower again and bring forth fruit.’ I will give you Mr Cobden’s description of Dr Mase, the Improvisatore above named. ‘His look and gestures were strikingly

eloquent, even to one who could not understand his language. There was a wild expression of inspiration in his countenance, which realised the idea of a poet's "fine frenzy," and the effect was heightened by his long black hair, which streamed from a high pale brow down upon his shoulders. His emotions imparted to the audience an electrical effect, which now roused them to immoderate excitement, and next melted them to tears. One of his verses produced an unanimous call for an encore; he paused for a moment, drew his fingers through his hair, then tried to reproduce the verse, but forth came the idea in another form of rhyme.' The dinner went off with great spirit, and Mr Cobden says that, remembering that they were sitting so near the walls of the Vatican, he considers it the most cheering proof of the widespread sympathy for Free Trade principles which he has yet seen in the course of all his travels. The Consul and Mr Sharpe were the only English present, except Count Arundel, who is of Italian rank though born in England. Mr Cobden had an interview with the wonder of the age, a reforming Pope! All the good he had previously heard of him was only the more confirmed upon a nearer approach. He found him simple, but elegant and dignified in his manners; sincere and earnest to do good, with, perhaps, more of common sense than genius in his composition. The doubt is whether he will have sufficient sternness of character to clear out the Augean stables of his predecessors. One almost fears he is too benevolent for the task. I am to be introduced to him on my return to Rome. Mr Cobden went alone and had a private audience, which gave him a better opportunity of putting in a word against the bull fights. He found His Holiness well acquainted with

the Spanish character and language, and on the point of sending a Nuncio to Spain, and that he would draw his attention to the atrocities of the 'Toros,' but he could hope for little more than the withdrawal of the countenance of the priesthood.

XIII.

ACCOUNT of a DINNER to Mr COBDEN at Rome.

(From the *Roman Advertiser*, February 13, 1847.)

On the 10th instant a dinner was given by many of the nobility and the most influential citizens of Rome to Mr Cobden. Amongst those present were Prince Corsini, Prince de Canino, the Marquis Dragonetti, the Duke of Bracciano, and the members of the Chamber of Commerce; the only English guests were Count Henry Arundel, Mr Sharpe, and Mr Freeborn, the British consular agent. The dinner was given in the large saloon of the Chamber of Commerce. The Marquis Patinziani was in the chair, and spoke as follows:—

'May God, Who by a manifest wonder has accorded to the Church and the State Pius IX., preserve him for long years to come! Long live the magnanimous Pius IX.! Long live Her Majesty the Queen of England! Long live Sir Robert Peel! Long live Richard Cobden, and long live the liberty of commerce!

'The great Christian family, impressed with ad-

miriation for the sublime and beneficent virtues which adorn the Sovereign Pontiff, beholds in him the Universal Pastor destined by Providence to bind a general and indissoluble knot of fraternal charity. Under his empire the virtues that gladden and honour our epoch will triumph over the vices that afflict and disgrace it ; the people amongst whom the faith of the gospel has not yet penetrated will behold in the Chair of St Peter the source of all truth, the seat of all justice, the centre of civilisation ; in fine, the pontifical subjects will behold realised all their desires and all their hopes. God, who has given to this best of princes a mission so sublime, will inspire him to dictate laws adapted to the age in which we live, and to maintain with firmness their exact observance. Thus we shall enjoy the benefits of order, law, peace and prosperity, and shall have cause to bless him daily as the author of our happiness.

‘And you, sir, as an illustrious Englishman, who has the glory of identifying your name with the grand principles of free commerce, accept from me, as a veteran in the profession of the same doctrines and as spokesman of those now present, our most sincere homage, united with thanks for the visit made to our country, and the honour done to this hospitable banquet. We, with all our fellow-citizens who love the just and useful, shall never be able to praise as we should desire your ardent endeavours to unite all the nations of the earth in the indissoluble bonds of true and reciprocal interests, and thus to destroy that national egotism which, flourishing under the protection of Monopoly, has produced so many prejudices, rivalries and sanguinary discords among nations. This will be the commencement of a new era, when nations, by means of the well-established principle of free traffic, shall acquire and maintain

mutual independence and peace, internal prosperity, order and tranquillity. The prodigious activity of the present generation shall have a proportionate field for development, and the young man of to-day shall have a way opened to useful occupations, failing which, rather than be condemned to intolerable inaction, he would abandon himself to the pursuit of chimeras, which ever prove the constant source of error, misfortune and loss. Free Trade, which has nothing in common with the intricacies of politics, is pre-eminently the true element of order in every government. It ameliorates the condition of the people, it produces a lasting and stable prosperity, which stimulates the moral progress of society, and triumphs over all obstacles.

‘We honour in you, Mr Cobden, the principles you represent, and the generosity which has done so much to revolutionise the old uncivilised commercial system—principles which, in the Middle Ages, gave wealth and grandeur to Italy, and which you have revived in England, which holds so high a place in modern civilisation.’

The health of Sir Robert Peel, proposed by the President, was then drunk with loud applause. The Marquis Dragonetti then spoke as follows :—

‘Let us all join in wishing long life and prosperity to our illustrious guest. He is an admirable example of that tenacity of purpose and firmness of will which triumphs over all obstacles.’

‘Mr Cobden had against him a powerful aristocracy of almost fabulous wealth, whose prestige was firmly established by a long record of great deeds. They bitterly opposed the bold but liberal project of removing a burdensome tax on the people’s bread. Even those Liberal ministers, who a few years before had themselves promoted a memorable reform, looked

upon this idea as extravagant folly, and shuddered at the thought of undermining those legal privileges, the basis of all the national greatness.

‘We honour, sir, your unrivalled perseverance, and we rejoice to entertain you in the city of eternal triumphs, and near the rock where stood the Capitol of ancient Rome. The conquerors of old drove to the citadel in golden chariots, because they had made the entire world a province of Rome, and subjected all nations to her empire. You, with your peaceful and legal victory, have given the strongest impulse to the universal association of nations, and the glory of sanguinary conquest pales before the splendour of yours, sanctified by that love which sanctifies all things—the love of virtuous liberty.

‘We specially revere in you the virtue of perseverance, which we, the sons of Italy, most need to regenerate our country, and we therefore desire from henceforth to enshrine it in the very spot, where of old stood the Temple of Capitoline Jove.’

Mr Cobden spoke as follows:—

‘Gentlemen, I am not surprised, however delighted, to find in this august capital, the mistress of the arts and patroness of learning, many enlightened men who take an interest in a question of commercial policy. It is a question which is historically connected with this country, for modern Europe is not more indebted to Italy for its arts and letters than for the revival of its commerce and manufactures; England preserves to this day many proofs of this origin of its commerce. The very account books of her merchants are kept upon the Italian model, and the street in London, where our bankers are congregated, still bears its Italian name (Lombard

Street). I am bound to say, however, that a fatal error pervaded generally the policy of the commercial states of the Middle Ages—an error which has been more or less imitated by all modern nations. The warlike spirit of a barbarous age was too generally introduced into the pursuits of commerce. Each country regarded its neighbour with the jealousy of a rival and the hatred of an enemy. People did not understand that trade, freely carried on between two countries, could promote the prosperity of both. They thought that commerce necessarily involved the sacrifice of one for the aggrandisement of the other. Hence arose those mercantile wars between neighbouring commercial states, each aiming at that impossibility, an exclusive trade, which led to the constant destruction of human life, and the waste of all those elements of wealth which are the great resource and support of commerce. Modern political economy, a science to which Italy has largely contributed, has shed a new light upon the true principles of trade, and has raised its character to the level of a more civilised age. It teaches us that commerce, if free, is a mutual interchange of benefits—that where two countries voluntarily trade together, it cannot permanently serve the interests of one without conferring equal benefits on the other, and that, therefore, under a general system of Free Trade, every commercial community has an interest in the prosperity and wealth of all other states. It destroys the motive which formerly tempted mercantile nations to enter upon wars to conquer customers, by proving that they can obtain the various productions of the earth's surface on more advantageous terms by Free Trade than by the exclusive conquest of territory. I do not mean to say that this principle is as yet generally understood in the world; but it has been

long demonstrated in theory by learned and philosophical writers. England has already led the way in the practical adoption of Free Trade, and other governments are preparing to follow her example. Everywhere it has become the theme of discussion, and I am glad to find that it is a favourite topic in Italy, for I calculate much upon the co-operation of your countrymen, whose acute, logical and practical genius never fails to shed a light upon whatever sciences it may undertake to elucidate. It would be to me an easy task to show how greatly the States of the Church might be benefited by the application of the principles of Free Trade. But I abstain; for I think it would be unbecoming in me to comment upon the public affairs of countries where I am hospitably received as a foreigner. But I see around me several gentlemen far more competent than myself to make the application of my views to their native country; and I conclude, thanking you for this kind reception, and with the expression of the confident hopes that the illustrious man who now fills the pontifical throne, and who has filled the world with the fame of his public virtues, will signalise his reign by carrying out in his dominions the peaceful and philanthropic principles of Free Trade.'

XIV.

COUNT VERZAGLIA to the EDITOR of the 'ROMAN ADVERTISER.' *February 1847.*

DEAR SIR,—Having had the honour of becoming acquainted with you a short time since, I wish to communicate to you some ideas, which I commit to writing whilst the impression received on a late occasion is fresh within me, and which you might publish if you consider them worthy.

A national dinner, given to an illustrious stranger, is a thing so totally new for us, that whoever assists at it for the first time experiences a certain astonishment—a pleasure quite unknown. The distinction conferred on Mr Cobden was of a nature to excite peculiar emotion, as a tribute not only of admiration for the great man, strong in his convictions, by which he has caused a principle to triumph remedial of a vast amount of ill, and fruitful of abundant good; but also of reverence towards the might of intellect, before which every injustice falls, every obstacle vanishes. I cannot now enter into a minute account of this re-union, but need only say that it was formed of the high aristocracy of Rome, the wealthy, financial and mercantile citizens, and some English gentlemen, who assembled in perfect accordance, both of ideas and sympathies. It would be useless to designate them by name, or analyse the speeches, since all particulars will be exactly given in the pages of the admirably conducted journal, the *Contemporaneo*. That which I desire particularly to animadvert to, is, that amidst the

tumultuous applauses with which the various ideas expressed before this intelligent audience were received, the highest enthusiasm was that awakened by Mr Cobden's calling to mind the ancient civilisation of Italy. That illustrious stranger cannot know what balm to the heart of an Italian is the praise bestowed on his country. The people that has twice diffused civilisation over all Europe, that amidst all the changes of time, has preserved its heart ever young, its genius ever lively and vigorous, feels too intensely the contempt that is often to be read in the eyes and heard from the lips of the stranger, not to clasp with fervour the hand of him who renders it justice. He recalled our mediæval civilisation, when we were what England is now—strong in a numerous fleet, with flourishing industries and widely-extended commerce.

Mr Cobden has called us England's model—has alluded to the Italian names of London streets, to the mercantile books, still kept on our system, as a proof that we initiated England in the paths that have led her to such exalted greatness. What happy memories, which awaken delicious emotions, call tears of joy to our eyes! You, who are so great, are alike generous, nor does a false patriotism lead you to gainsay History and the Truth. Your memory shall live forever in our hearts, illustrious guest! and your sojourn in Italy shall not be without fruit for her sons. Ardent in patriotic love, mighty in intellect, invincible in conviction, fertile in plans, open-handed, modest as great, you are the type of the true citizen. Your name, with those of the generous friends who have seconded you in such an arduous undertaking, is impressed indelibly on our souls, and when we also shall be ready to exert ourselves in the service of our country, fair and still

great as she is, then we may say to ourselves we imitate Cobden! Begging you to accept the assurance of my esteem,—I remain, dear sir, your obedient servant,

COUNT GIULIO VERZAGLIA, Junior.

XV.

LETTER from Mr COBDEN to Mr SCHWABE.

ROME, 24th Feb. 1847.

I can't say that I have seen a tenth part of the curiosities and antiquities of Rome, the living calls on my time have absorbed so much of my attention. Besides the number of English visitors, and their name is legion, I have been thrown amongst some very intelligent and public-spirited Italians, whose patriotic feelings are just now in a state of exaltation, owing to the liberal character of the Pope. I had an interview with him on Monday evening. He received me in his little cabinet, wearing, as usual, a white friar's dress of plain white woollen. He was of course very gracious, as he is to everybody—complimenting me on the work I had been engaged in and the manner in which it had been done, observing that England is the only country where men can be found of tenacity of purpose

enough to carry out reforms by the slow process of legal and moral discussion. He avowed himself a partisan of my views, and said all that lay within his power, and adding modestly that it was but *little*, he would do to promote Free Trade principles. I contented myself with simply drawing his attention, in French, which he speaks well, to the sound commercial policy of his neighbour, the Grand Duke of Tuscany, from whose example we had not been ashamed to borrow information in England. I told him, if he inquired, he would find that all classes and all interests, including the Public Treasury, were more prosperous there than in any part of Italy, and that, in my opinion, the policy of Tuscany was equally calculated to benefit the Papal States; but, at the same time, I remarked that Tuscany was a bad neighbour for him so long as his tariff was exorbitantly high, because it caused a large contraband trade to be carried on across his frontiers. Tell Mrs Schwabe I did not forget to tell His Holiness about the bull fights which are carried on in Spain in honour of the Virgin and the Saints on their *fête* days, and I gave him the little extract, cut from a Spanish paper, describing the bull fights at Saragossa in honour of their patroness the Virgin, and which the journalist described as being 'worthy of the occasion.' His Holiness reads Spanish (he has been in Chili), and took the bit of paper and perused it attentively. He understands the passion of the Spaniards for this bloody sport, and spoke in feeling terms of its cruelty and the demoralisation which attends it. I, of course, offered a thousand apologies for introducing the subject, and told him that although no power on earth could suddenly put an end to the amusement yet if the clergy were to discountenance it, and the

women were dissuaded from attending it, it would gradually become unfashionable. He thanked me for having called his attention to it. He said he was about to send a special envoy to Spain, and would give him instructions on the subject. I was curious and very anxious, in coming to Rome, to learn whether all that we had heard at a distance about the Pope's liberal tendencies was founded on truth. I have had the opportunity of conversing with men who have known him from his youth, and are still in the habit of seeing him frequently. The unanimous testimony which everybody bears of his excellent character has left the proof upon my mind that *he is one of the best men that ever lived.* Simple and unpretending in his manners, yet he is full of moral dignity; and although I should not say he is a man of commanding genius, still, those who know him well, describe him as one of very superior talents. Strong good sense, with the happy accompaniment of a most amiable nature, appears to me to be his true character. If he be deficient for the arduous task before him, it is because he has not sufficient *sternness* for the undertaking. I am told, however, that he has firmness and moral courage to a high degree. But what an Augean stable he has to clean! He found the finances in terrible disorder—every part of the administration corrupt or inefficient, thousands of the people in prison for political offences, or because they were *suspected* by a cruel or timid government, and thousands more in exile. He began by a complete amnesty for all political offences. He has a Commission sitting to revise the laws, and he is trying to repair his finances. But he is standing almost alone, not more from the want of men willing to co-operate with him (for reform is now fashionable) than from the scarcity

of those who are *able* to carry on the government upon sounder principles. In person he is robust, plain-mannered, but good-looking. His face is an index to his good-nature and common sense. When Kate* and I saw him first at his devotions in St Peter's, we both agreed, as we sat near with a side-view of his face, that he resembles Joseph Sturge! His history is singular. When young, he came to Rome and tried to gain admittance to the body-guard of the Pope, but failed in consequence of having been subject to epileptic fits, which disqualified him for a military life. He then entered the Church, but for some time the state of his health prevented his having permission to perform Mass. After the War of Independence he was sent to South America with the nuncio despatched by the Pope to the new States there. On his return, much to his surprise, he was created a cardinal. He was residing in his province, far from Rome, when the late Pope died, and he came up to attend the conclave for electing his successor, with no more idea of becoming Pope than I had. In fact, he only arrived in Rome a few hours before they were shut up in conclave. How it was that one of the youngest, the most liberal, and the very best of the cardinals, one who had never intrigued for, or sought or expected the promotion, was elected Pope, is to this day a mystery. I have heard enthusiastic men, not over orthodox in their religious notions, assert that it was a special interposition of Providence for the benefit of Italy. They may well be excused for being a little enthusiastic, when we remember the sudden transition they have undergone, from the gloomy oppression of the late reign to the frank and honest and con-

* Mrs Cobden.

finding rule of the present Pontiff. Altogether, I regard the present state of affairs at Rome as one of the most interesting and not the least important events of our day.

XVI.

Mrs COBDEN to Mrs SCHWABE. 1847.

FLORENCE, *April 2nd, 1847.*

I shall enclose this and some lines delivered at dinner at a gentleman's house in this neighbourhood in the little packet which I shall send through the Ambassador's bag to England. I do not attempt to translate the latter, as you are a better Italian scholar than I can pretend to be. A friend has promised to render the poetry into prose, in which case you shall have both. The dinner was at Monsieur Fenzi's country house, about six miles from hence, beautifully situated on one of the numerous hills, which rise in conical shape one above another around Florence. The grounds are very extensive, and better kept than any we have hitherto seen in Italy. There were upwards of thirty persons at dinner, after which Signor Zaunini delivered a poetical address to Mr Cobden, which drew tears from the eyes of the ladies, and made the men clench their teeth and look sternly at each other.

FLORENCE, *April 23rd, 1847*

I have a little pamphlet for you, which contains a speech which Mr Cobden delivered at the Academy of Pontaniana, at Naples, of which he was elected a member. I do not know when it will reach you, but I shall get it sent through the Ambassador's bag from here to London, and get my brother to forward it from thence to you. I expect a paper daily to follow us from the Eternal City with an interesting account of our visit to Perugia; as soon as it arrives I shall send it through the post as usual. I assure you I never was more pleased with anything than the elegant and enthusiastic manner the inhabitants of that polished city welcomed my husband. The first evening they sent a full band of music to the inn to amuse us with several airs. Then a deputation from the Società Economica-Agraria of Perugia called and presented Mr Cobden with the diploma—a silver medal—constituting him an honorary member of that body. The following day we were taken, accompanied by a party of gentlemen, to see the curiosities of the town and neighbourhood. Then in the evening a large party assembled at the Casino of gentlemen and ladies, and entertained us with music and singing; then an address was delivered by Signor Bartoli, complimentary to Mr Cobden. On the walls were painted some lines in praise of his Free Trade labours, and the same printed on white paper was handed round to the company. The one given to my husband was done in gold letters on blue silk, fringed with gold, in a crimson binding. I shall never forget the scene; it had nothing of 'dull reality' about it.

XVII.

PUBLIC BANQUET to Mr COBDEN at Florence.

(From *Morning Chronicle* of 14th May 1847.)

A banquet was given on the 29th April to our distinguished countryman in the magnificent gallery of the Borghesi Palace in Florence. Signor Vincenzo Perruzzi, the Gonfaloniere of the city, presided. Upon Mr Cobden's health having been drunk with enthusiasm, he rose and spoke as follows:—

'Gentlemen,—I should feel much embarrassed if I believed this splendid demonstration was intended as a personal compliment to myself; for, whatever may be thought of my merits in other countries, I can have no title to pre-eminence as a Free-trader in an assembly of Tuscans. But no; we meet here as brethren in a common faith, myself a younger brother, to unite our vows in favour of that commercial liberty, which Tuscany, of all the nations of the earth, was the first to put in practice upon sound economical principles. Other people, as for instance the Dutch and Swiss, owing to the accidents of their geographical position, may have always enjoyed peculiar exemptions from commercial restrictions, but to Tuscany is undoubtedly due the glory of having preceded by half a century the rest of the world in the application of the theories of economical science to its legislation. Here political economy was first erected into a commercial code. Let us render a solemn homage to the memories of those

men who gave to the world so great a lesson in statesmanship. Honour to Baudini, who, a century ago, discovered the truth, of which more than half the civilised world is still ignorant, that liberty of commerce is the only safeguard of nations against the evils of scarcity, and their surest guide to agricultural and commercial prosperity. Honour—immortal honour—to Leopold, who, taking the torch of science from the hand of Baudini, entered upon the then dark and untrodden path of Free Trade, and, guided only by its pure light, proceeded onwards with an unfaltering step, undeterred by the obstacles which ignorance, prejudice and self-interest threw in his way. Honour to Neri, John Fabbroni, Fossombroni and the rest, who preserved from the attacks of sophistry his great work to our day. These are the real benefactors of mankind, to whom we ought to decree honours and monuments, whose peaceful triumphs will shed blessings upon myriads yet unborn, long after the causes and consequences of blood-stained victories are lost in oblivion and nothingness.

‘Gentlemen, I am not in the habit of addressing my hearers in terms of flattery, and I should like it to be understood that the few words I have to add are intended for those who may chance to read my remarks in other countries rather than as complimentary phrases offered to a Tuscan audience. Upon this, my first visit to Italy, I have felt naturally curious to witness the effects of Free Trade, particularly in corn, upon the moral and material condition of a people. I must confess that I entered Tuscany with feelings of enthusiasm such as a devotee experiences in visiting the shrine of his faith. But I have endeavoured to cast an impartial eye upon all that I have seen, and if what I state

as the result of my observation be erroneous, it will be open to correction by others. During the last eight months I have been travelling in nearly all the countries of Southern Europe, and I am bound to state, without wishing to disparage other nations, that I find the condition of the population of Tuscany superior to that of any people I have visited. The surface of the country resembles that of a well-cultivated garden; the people are everywhere well dressed; I have seen no beggars, except a few lame or blind; and in this season of general scarcity there is less of suffering from want of food here, with a perfect freedom of export and import of corn than in probably any other country in Europe. I find such industries as are natural to Tuscany carried on with success; and that, in particular, of its indigenous straw manufacture, has attained a development which has surprised me. But I do not confine my observations to the material condition of the people. Where a country had enjoyed for fifty years the advantages of commercial liberty, I expected to find the spirit of Free Trade entering into the character of its people, abating their natural prejudices, destroying the spirit of egotism, and imparting to them a sentiment of brotherhood towards other nations. And in this respect I have not been disappointed in the inhabitants of Tuscany. I am only repeating the opinion of every traveller when I say that they are eminently courteous and mild towards strangers. Foreigners make this country their favourite abode, not merely because here there is no impediment to a cheap and abundant supply of luxuries and comforts from every part of the globe, but because they find a charm in the amiable cordiality of the Tuscan people. Such is a description of the only country in Southern

Europe which enjoys the advantages of Free Trade, and I will not add a word of comment, but leave the facts I have stated for the instruction of other nations.

‘Gentlemen, I thank you heartily for this cordial reception of a fellow-labourer in our good cause. The remembrance of this happy evening will always be a source of the highest gratification to me. I conclude by drinking to the rapid extension of Free Trade principles all over the world.’

X V I I.

EXTRACT from a SPEECH delivered by Lord PALMERSTON at the Mansion House during the same month in which Mr Cobden addressed the Free-traders at Florence.

(From the *Morning Chronicle* of May 14th, 1847.)

‘It is the peculiar character of the days in which we live that the merits and advantages of commerce are duly appreciated by all. In earlier stages of civilisation, men look with admiration to the exercise of power—power employed in conquering and subjugating their unoffending neighbours; but in proportion as intelligence has been diffused, and as civilisation has advanced, men have been led to think that the increase of commercial enterprise, the advance of commercial prosperity, is one of the objects most deserving of the attention and of the

care of mankind. Men are now well satisfied that the glory of a country consists not in overthrowing the liberties of their neighbours, but in diffusing those principles of commercial intercourse which are the great foundation of international peace. Men are satisfied that commerce is the great foundation of peace, and that peace affords the surest and only protection to commerce.

XIX.

From Mrs COBDEN to Mrs SCHWABE.

TURIN, *May 21st, 1847.*

We arrived here last night, and found the hotel very full, this being the time of year for strangers to return from the South of France. The English Minister here has already sent to engage us to dine with him to-day, and for two days next week. On Monday a public dinner is to be given to Richard; the one at Leghorn went off very satisfactorily. Richard is become such a Frenchman that he now delivers his speeches in that language without the least difficulty. There were fifty persons present, and as many more were disappointed in consequence of the room not being large enough; indeed, such was the eagerness for admission that the number might have been doubled. There were men of almost every nation in Europe at the table, and of every faith excepting the Mahomedan.

On our arrival at Genoa we found that poor

O'Connell had died there the night before. The following morning we called on his son, and saw his old servant, Diggins, who had lived about his person thirteen years, and who appeared deeply sorrowful at his loss. He told Richard privately it was not his master's wish to leave England for Rome, that he had been advised by others to undertake the journey, and that he would have gone to Derrynane in preference if his wishes had been consulted. Richard saw Dr Miley, his chaplain, a very gentlemanly man, who gave him a better account of O'Connell's intellect during his last illness than he was led to expect. He did not sink into the low state of debility which I had heard described; he suffered little pain, and he was hardly insensible to the last. Dr Duff, who assisted in the *post-mortem* examination, described the brain, which had softened, as the source of the disease. Richard received an invitation to attend the funeral ceremonies for O'Connell, but was, unfortunately, prevented.

We have now been nearly six weeks in Italy, and so much is there to be seen in this lovely land that we have not been able anywhere to become acquainted with half the wonders of the place; indeed, Rome alone requires half a year to itself. Nothing can exceed the kindness and hospitality, both public and private, lavished upon Richard, who is astonished and pleased with the individual intellect of the Italian people.

TURIN, *May 23d*, 1847.

We have not yet fixed on anything certain, and least of all on our journey to Russia. There is no foundation in Mr Cobden's having had any direct communication from the Emperor; but two or three persons who have been lately in his dominions have

given it as their opinion that he would be very well received there. However, the probability is that Mr Cobden will leave that journey till a future year. The Free-traders of Geneva have sent him a most pressing invitation to visit them.

TURIN, *May 25, 1847.*

The dinner went off gloriously last evening. His first French speech Mr Cobden delivered at the Georgofile Society at Florence, at which some hundreds of people were present, and so great was the applause he there received, that he has been encouraged ever since to follow the same course. Last Sunday morning we went to the Palace to see the King, Queen and Court pass through the ante-chamber to the church adjoining—a grand procession of officers and courtiers. The King walked beside the Grand Ecuyer, and was followed by the Queen (who was the only one who had a train) and the ladies of the Court. They were all dressed in rich watered black silk, with white mantillas very prettily arranged, so as to give interest and height to the figure. The Count de Pollone, one of the gentlemen-in-waiting, joined us and conducted us over the Palace, which contains some handsome rooms, the floors being formed of inlaid wood. The following morning the Grand Ecuyer called upon Mr Cobden, and, in the course of conversation, mentioned that the King had inquired if we had been comfortably shown over the Palace, which was rather a piece of unexpected politeness on the part of a king. Indeed, it is well that Mr Cobden does not possess a great share of self-esteem, or the people of Italy would have long ago made him lose his head, so great has been their kindness towards him. Everywhere have the nobles and people done

him honour in public, and received him affectionately and most hospitably in private; everywhere has he met with great individualities, and surely, with such natural productions, there is much to be hoped from the country. We shall now very soon be entering the Austrian dominions, where we do not expect any demonstrations in favour of Free Trade.

BELVEDERE, ON THE LAKE OF COMO,

June 8th, 1847.

We were detained longer than we expected at Milan, for we were agreeably surprised to find that the friends of Free Trade were permitted by the Austrian authorities to give Mr Cobden a banquet, at which eighty persons were present. Signor Basevi took the chair. This gentleman had, in the time of Napoleon, the courage to act as counsel in defence of Hofer, the Tyrolese leader, when he was tried by a military commission at Mantua, and sentenced to be shot.

VENICE, *June 24th, 1847.*

On the 21st inst. they gave Mr Cobden a public dinner here. It was given on an island just opposite to our hotel, under an alcove of vines; the party consisted of upwards of seventy persons, the Count Pricili in the chair, the Podesta, or Mayor, by his side. My husband made a short speech in French without any preparation, therefore I am unable to give you a copy. After the dinner the company entered their gondolas, which were waiting, and, accompanied by an excellent band of music, proceeded in procession down the Grand Canal to the bridge of the Rialto. The music and the gay liveries of some of the boatmen soon attracted a

great number of other gondolas. The sounds and sight also brought everybody into the balconies. As they returned, the moon, which had risen, gave a fresh charm to the picturesque scene, which was sufficiently romantic to excite poetical emotions, my husband says, even in the mind of a political economist. It was of a nature to remind one of the days when the Doge went in state to marry the Adriatic.

VIENNA, *July 16th*, 1847.

We have had no public demonstrations here in favour of Free Trade. Prince Metternich sent a message to beg that Mr Cobden would call upon him, which, of course, he did, and found his appearance scarcely denoting the veteran of 75. His head and countenance conveyed the impression of high polish, rather than native force of character, and his conversation, my husband says, is more subtle than profound.

A few days after this interview, we were invited to dine with the Prince and Princess. We sat down to dinner at five o'clock, and all was over by half-past six when we left, and returned again at ten to a *soirée* and a little dance, which, I believe, was given out of compliment to us, as we were told that such a thing is scarcely ever known at Vienna at this time of the year. The Prince was particularly polite to me, out of compliment to my husband, of course, but when I sat next to him at table, I assure you I felt rather uncomfortable, for I could not help thinking of our good kind Italian friends, who consider so many of the misfortunes of their beloved country caused by Metternich.

BERLIN, *July 29th*, 1847.

We are quite wrong in being in Germany at this

time of the year, for everywhere we find all the respectable families gone off to their different baths. There is every probability of my being home in the course of a fortnight after the receipt of this, but Mr Cobden will not return with me, as he wishes to go as far as St Petersburg so as to make himself acquainted with the state of trade in the Baltic; he then will have completed his information in that respect all over Europe. He is now in excellent health, and therefore I tell him he can spare me very well, for it would really break my heart to turn my back again on my children.

MACHYNLYTH, *Aug. 22nd, 1847.*

I have had a letter within the last few days from Mr Cobden from Königsberg. I will send you part of it.

XX.

Mr COBDEN to Mrs COBDEN.

KÖNIGSBERG, *12th August 1847.*

I reached Stettin at eleven o'clock on the day on which we parted, and was soon surrounded by some excellent Free-traders, who insisted upon getting up a dinner on the very evening. Nothing could be more enthusiastic than my reception. The next day at twelve, in spite of all remonstrances to the

contrary, I started again for Dantzic, a distance of 220 miles, and which we accomplished in about thirty-three hours. The country in a general way is sandy and poor, but they contrive to get crops of corn from it. However, the fine wheat which you hear so much about, as coming from Dantzic, is not grown near the coast, but is brought down the Vistula and Bug from the interior. Another public dinner was got up at a day's notice. I made a funny speech, I told the company that I was fairly entitled to a banquet at Dantzic, for it had been a great obstacle to my agitation in England; that the Duke of Richmond always made the Dantzichers a great bugbear, by telling the farmers they would overwhelm them with corn *for nothing* if the law was repealed, that I was surprised to find them such civilised respectable-looking people, etc. Dantzic is a very interesting-looking old town, with the gable ends of the houses turned towards the streets and prettily ornamented—it has some old buildings such as an Exchange and the Senate Chamber of the time, when it was one of the Hanse-towns—a free and independent city, the Venice of the Baltic—these buildings contain works handsomely painted and decorated considering the time and the country but they do not come up to Genoa or Venice in taste. I left Dantzic by the steamer yesterday morning at six for Königsberg, and got here at five in the evening. I lay down upon deck for six hours without stirring a hand or foot, and so escaped sea sickness for a wonder. This is the largest of all the Prussian seaports on the Baltic, containing about 70,000 inhabitants. You will see by the map that it is situated in a corner of Prussia, close up towards Russia—but I am told that it is a very radical place. At present, I have only seen the Consul, and I shall

try to escape a dinner here, for, to tell the truth, I am heartily sick of these German banquets, which last four or five hours. I called last evening, with the English Consul, upon the Russian Consul, who gave us a cup of tea, or rather a glass of tea, the best I ever tasted; it was as clear as sherry in appearance and of a most exquisite flavour. As I approach the Russian frontiers, I hear still better accounts of the travelling, which (at least the mail) seems to be faster than in Germany. From hence to Tilsit is about ten or twelve hours, and then three hours more will carry me into the land of the Cossacks. I am sorry to say the potato disease has appeared within the last days along this coast in a very virulent form. I saw some fields which had turned quite black.

ST PETERSBURGH, 19 August 1847.

I arrived here this morning at ten o'clock by the coach from Riga, which place I left on Monday evening at seven. I had no companion who could say a word in French or English, so that my lungs have had a pretty good respite. After leaving Königsberg, I proceeded in a carriage as far as Touroggen, a little village within the Russian frontier, little more than 100 miles journey. The Russian Consul at Königsberg, who is a baptised Jew, sent one of his clerks very politely along with me. He was a young Israelite, a sharp fellow, speaking half-a-dozen languages. He is a Russian subject. On our approaching the frontiers, I joked him about being rather low-spirited, and asked him whether it was at the thoughts of entering his native country. 'I don't know what it is that always makes me so low-spirited when I get here,' said he; 'perhaps it is something in the air which

almost suffocates me,' striking his breast at the same time. At the last Russian post-house I walked on whilst the horses were changing ; it was twilight, and I had proceeded at a brisk pace for about two miles over a wild country, when I came to one of those long poles striped diagonal black and white, which was suspended right across the road. I stooped to walk under it, when forth popped a rough-looking soldier from a tent at the side with a bayonet, which he levelled at me as if I had been the advanced guard of another French invasion. My French and English were equally lost upon the Cossack sentry, and so I was preparing to retreat, and made signs that a carriage was coming, but he was not at all satisfied with my pantomimes, and he kept close alongside of me till I got back to a spot where a slight trench had been dug across the country on each side of the road to which he pointed, and I understood that we were still within the Russian frontier ; and so there I stood with my interesting companion in the dusk of the evening till my young Israelitish friend came to my rescue, and explained who and what I was. We then passed the black and white barrier, which was raised for us, and then dropped behind us, and we were fairly upon Russian ground. Upon reaching Tour-oggen, the director of the Douane declined to examine my luggage, and behaved very civilly. I was detained there a whole day, took tea with him, and really enjoyed the quiet village. But somebody stole my map of Europe, which annoyed me for the rest of the journey here. From thence to Riga, I went in the courier post, carrying two persons at a famous speed, and had the good luck to have a Russian nobleman for my companion who spoke French, and was banker for us for the journey.

We passed through some wretched little towns, or rather villages, of wooden huts peopled with Polish Jews—a wretched, dirty and degraded population. I stopped only for a few days at Riga, and then came on here without stopping, three nights and three days in the *coupé* of the mail—the road and travelling good—the inns very superior to those in Spain—the beautiful tea, cream and sugar everywhere ; in fact, there is no tea to compare with what you get here in the poorest cabaret. I have only had a cursory peep at this city. The river is half as broad again as the Thames, and presents a fine appearance, with its public buildings on each side. There is not a city in Europe with so noble a stream flowing through it. Should another Liverpool one day grow up at Birkenhead, then the Mersey will alone outshine the Neva at St Petersburg. But I find that the open spaces and vast streets are altogether so large that the buildings and monuments are thrown into miniature—Peter the Great's Statue, standing upon a rock of granite which would be sublime in Waterloo Place, is lost in the almost boundless space which surrounds it. Besides, there is something altogether upstart and parvenu-looking in the appearance of the city, always excepting the glorious river. But I must not pass judgment upon what I have not seen. I forgot to say that the country, all the way from Königsberg, and I might say from Berlin, is flat and uninteresting. I scarcely once ascended an eminence which commanded a view of ten miles. The land is not half or even a quarter cultivated or peopled. In coming from Königsberg here, upwards of 400 miles, I did not pass through a town of 15,000 inhabitants, and but very few villages, which were all of wood ;

I found myself more and more in a pine f
at every step.

Moscow, 25 August 18

I arrived here this morning from St Petersburg from whence I came alone in a carriage with horses, finding no place for a week to be had in diligence, so you may suppose I have grown strong in my lungs with such a long respite. Every evening I start again for Nishni Novgorod in order to reach there before the close of the day. The travelling so far in Russia has been exceedingly different from our sufferings in Spain. The road from St Petersburg here is perhaps the best in the world, as you may suppose when the mail has done the whole distance, 520 miles, in forty-eight hours. To-day I have strolled for a couple of hours through Moscow, and am quite surprised and delighted with it. No city which I have visited has astonished me more. It is completely oriental in its character but with every advantage which modern civilization can afford. You see innumerable little towers and cupolas, the latter of golden green or deep blue. The roofs of the houses and churches are covered with iron plates painted green, so that it really gives one an idea of what Bagdad or Granada might have been in their glory. It is a singular coincidence, but I find much to remind me of Andalusia in this opposite quarter of the compass. The men wear little flat hats, with high narrow brims just as they do in Spain, with the exception of a tassel, which is wanting here, and I have heard the peasants chanting songs in the same low monotonous key. But perhaps I ought not to be astonished with this. I recollect that I am now only a few days' journey from the frontiers of Asia, from whence came

manners of the Moors as well as many of those of the former rulers of this country. On my return I shall see the St Petersburg's sights. Whilst there, I saw only a great military parade of about 50,000 men, nearly half cavalry, at twenty miles from the city. The Emperor reviewed them, and I stood for an hour within ten paces of him, and still nearer the Empress. He is a remarkably fine-looking man, perhaps the finest on the ground. She has an air of anxiety, like the Queen of the French, and is nearly as thin, though much younger. When I left St Petersburg, I directed my letters to be forwarded to me here for ten days, so that, on my return from Nishni to find some news, I am told that at the fair there is a difficulty in getting sleeping-rooms in which one can escape all sorts of insects. This may be supposed, when one recollects that there are two or three hundred thousand people of all nations to be accommodated in a little town of 20,000 inhabitants, so I am borrowing a mattress and a pillow, and have made a contrivance by which I can turn the inside of my carriage into a good sleeping-room.

XXI.

Mrs COBDEN to Mrs SCHWABE. 1848.

PENCARROW, CORNWALL,
January 10th, 1848.

You will have heard that Pigou, the gunpowder manufacturer, and the old Duke have been trying to frighten John Bull out of his senses by crying, 'The French are coming!' but it is to be hoped that the middle class of Old England will prove more than a match for them, and not allow themselves to be this time bamboozled into paying more taxes. The country is already making a strong movement against this mad war-cry. How thoroughly undeserving the Whigs show themselves of liberal support immediately they are in office! It is not at all unlikely that they will vote a sum of money—but not so great as if there had been no resistance—towards the increase of armaments, and thereby hasten their own downfall. Many thanks for the work about the Libre Exchange you have sent us; it is quite encouraging to find the French Free-traders making a little progress. A very interesting meeting likewise took place a little while ago at Havre, where a speaker uttered almost the same sentiments, and nearly at the same time, on the Peace Question, as Mr Cobden did at a public meeting in Lancashire.

103 WESTBOURNE TERRACE,
Oct. 28th, 1848.

Mr Cobden thinks that the view you take with regard to the effect Free Trade will have respecting

the question of slavery in the Brazils is quite correct. We have been living so very quietly whilst at Hayling that politics have become almost a strange theme to us—at all events, to me. The events at Vienna have been the most startling of late. They did not at all surprise us, but they came rather sooner than was expected. I recollect, when at that city, that Mr Cobden foretold that these things would come to pass some day, in consequence of the heterogeneous nature of the empire.

XXII.

MR GEORGE COMBE TO MR RICHARD COBDEN.

EDINBURGH, 22nd January 1849.

MY DEAR SIR,—A severe cold has prevented me from sooner expressing the great gratification I received from your speech at Manchester on Financial Reform. Your illustration of what constitutes the strength of a nation, founded on the example of the United States, was to me new, forcible and convincing, and it, in fact, embodies a great practical principle, more applicable to our country than to any other in the world. The United Kingdom contains a greater amount of all the elements of power, viz., wealth, intelligence, self-reliance, combativeness, capacity for co-operation and means of concentration, than any other kingdom on earth; and from our insular situation we may more safely rely on this

power for defence or attack than any other people. This constituted, in my judgment, the strongest point of your argument. The French are the only people from whom we need apprehend attack. I have less confidence than you in their *Nationality*. The reflecting organs, and also those of cautiousness and conscientiousness, are so defective in the majority of the French, that I feel little reliance on their being guided even by true views of their own interest. Since February 1848 every event in France has been an independent phenomenon, which no sagacity could have foreseen, and the connection of which, with its antecedents, bespeaks a sad lack of reason in the national mind. I cannot, therefore, answer for their future conduct. But what then? Let us use all lawful endeavours not to offend or provoke them; and if they should go mad and attack us unprovoked, we shall then let them feel our strength. Their wanton attack would withdraw all the superior minds of France from, and rally all the superior minds of England for, the combat, and our might, backed by right, would soon vindicate the honour of our country.

I am amused by the articles in the *Times* on your movement. Its conductors are sorely puzzled which side to take. In one paper recently published they furnished you with a fine weapon of attack against themselves. They are the champions of the Church, yet they roundly stated that the English people rejoice in the mercantile profits of war, and in the triumphs of victory, irrespective of the morality of the questions between themselves and their antagonists; in short, that they love war, plunder and domineering, and for those pleasures are prepared to pay. There is too much truth in this representation as drawn from times bygone. But what is the use

of Christianity, and all our sects, clergymen, churches, missionaries and saints, if the people not only are in this immoral condition, but are to be assumed (as a fixed principle in conducting the government of the country) as certain for ever to remain in that immoral state—all these appliances notwithstanding? You could ply the *saints* with this taunt of the *Times*, and force them to come to your side to vindicate the efficacy of their own teaching; and it would do good to hold the religious leaders of the people responsible for rendering them *moral* at least, if not intelligent.

Did you read Sir William Napier's description of the soldier's profession? I copied it, and it is this:—'Our profession is a terrible one, in which natural rights have no place; we have only conventional rights. War requires a stern organisation, fitted to raise men above the ordinary weaknesses, wants and emotions of humanity; it will not admit of delicate consideration for bodily sufferings or nice sensibilities. The soldier must do or die.'—*Evening Mail*, 17th January 1849. This is a true but terrible statement to present to a Christian community, and we may well ask them some day to rise above honouring, or even maintaining and augmenting the members of such a profession.

I fear that you will be exposed to a ceaseless cannonade from the gentlemen of the sword and their friends, and hope that you will be able to preserve throughout the contest that beautiful moral equanimity which rendered your efforts so irresistible in the Corn Law agitation. Rely on the moral sentiments, make all allowance for your opponents as individuals, give them credit for every virtue which you possibly can perceive in them, and confine your attacks to the system of war and 'brute force' itself, and you will carry thousands of hearts

with you. Avoid sarcasm, even when most temptingly applied, for it affords the enemy something on which to ride off from the main point of your argument. But I am forgetting myself. I am schooling you, when I should be learning from you. Excuse my presumption, for you know my profound respect for you; and with kindest regards from Mrs Combe and myself to you and Mrs Cobden, who, I presume, like my wife, follows you earnestly in all your doings.—I remain, my dear sir, yours very sincerely,
GEO. COMBE.

XXIII.

Mrs COBDEN to Mrs SCHWABE.

5 PARADE, EASTBOURNE,
August 23d, 1849.

Mr Cobden is at present in Paris attending the Peace Congress, at which he says there is every prospect of a large attendance. They had calculated upon the attraction of Lamartine's name, but are disappointed. From all accounts he appears to be prostrated in mind, body and estate. They have now chosen Victor Hugo for chairman, who stands well socially, Mr Cobden says, and his name is known. Bastiat had gone to Brussels, but was expected back to the Congress. In speaking of Paris, Mr Cobden says,—‘Externally, it looks the same as

ever ; but I fancy I see a haggard, careworn expression in the people's faces, which bespeaks past suffering and apprehension for the future. This may be imagination ; but I think I see a great many sunken eyes and clenched lips amongst all classes. There have been terrible suffering and losses, and nobody has escaped them, from the King to the cabman.'

5 PARADE, EASTBOURNE,
Sept. 5th, 1849.

My husband returned from Paris to us on Friday last, after a most gratifying and satisfactory visit. The description I hear of the *fêtes* given to the Peace Congress at Versailles and St Cloud makes me regret that I had not the opportunity of witnessing them. The illuminated water works at St Cloud surpassed, I am told, all that one dreams about in fairy tales.

XXIV.

MR COBDEN'S SPEECH against WAR LOANS, delivered
at a Public Meeting held in London. *8th*
October 1849.

MR CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,—The resolution I have to propose is as follows :—
'That the Government of Austria having pro-

posed to raise a loan in foreign countries, capitalists and men of business are thereby invited to investigate the financial position of the said Government, and the probability of its repaying the loan thus proposed to be contracted ; and that it is the opinion of this meeting that no valid security is tendered, or can be offered, in the present state of the Austrian Government, which would justify prudent men in taking any part of the said loan.'

Gentlemen, it has been my privilege to address my fellow-countrymen probably as often, and in as great a variety of places, as any man now living ; but I will say, with unfeigned confidence, that there never was an occasion when I stood before my countrymen on such solid and firm grounds of justice, of humanity, and of sound political economy, as I do at this moment. Now, gentlemen, objections have been taken to the course I have pursued in this matter, on the ground that I am not adhering to sound principles of political economy. I suppose it was thought that that was the most vulnerable point on which one who had said so much on the subject of Free Trade could be assailed. I will begin, then, with that which the enemy considers his strong ground of attack ; and I say that, as I have gone through the length and breadth of this country with Adam Smith in my hand to advocate the principles of Free Trade, I can stand here, with Adam Smith also in my hand, to denounce—not merely for its inherent waste of national wealth, not only because it anticipates income and consumes capital, but also on the ground of injustice to posterity, in saddling upon our heirs a debt we have no right to call upon them to pay—the loans we have this day met to consider. But, gentlemen, whilst I come here to denounce as unjust, to expose

as wasteful, and to demonstrate to be impolitic, the system of lending money for the purposes for which Austria comes to borrow, I confine myself there. I do not purpose here to recommend that we should go to Parliament for a law to prohibit men from lending money if it be their wish to do so. All I say is, that I come here to try in a humble way to do that which I have done for Free Trade—to popularise to the people of this country and of the Continent those principles which Adam Smith, David Hume, Montesquieu, Ricardo, M'Culloch, and every man who has written on this subject, have demonstrated to be injurious to mankind and unjust in principle. I come here, gentlemen, to try to show to our fellow-countrymen, in the first place, that they will act upon a wrong principle, and do injury to society, by lending the proceeds of their hard and industrious labour to the Austrian Government, to be expended in that bottomless gulf of waste—armies and standing armaments. I come here to show the impolicy, on general principles, of taking such a course. But in this particular instance I am not going to confine myself to the general principle. I appeal to every individual who thinks of lending money to the Austrian Government, to pause before he does so; because he is going to intrust his money to a Power that has thrice committed an act of bankruptcy.

After examining the state of the Austrian finances in detail, Mr Cobden continued as follows:—

We have not met to talk over Austrian finances and affairs, to uncover these sore places, and to tell all these hard truths, without having been invited to it. Here is an advertisement put into our papers, at the expense, I suppose, of the Austrian Govern-

ment, inviting everybody to subscribe to the lot. The advertisers are so accommodating that, in order that nobody may be excluded, they say people may subscribe as low as 100 florins, or £10. It is said that the pith of a lady's letter is to be found in the postscript, and I entreat the attention of all persons whether here, in Holland, or in Germany (I am not merely speaking to a few of my countrymen in this room, but what I say will be read in Holland in Germany, and in France), to the last line of the advertisement. It runs thus:—'Any subscriber who collects a higher amount than 25,000 florins, or any person who collects subscriptions to an amount surpassing that sum, will receive a commission of $\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. on the amount of the payments made.'

Now, I ask you, if any shopkeeper or huckster in London put an advertisement outside his window, 'Anybody who brings a customer to my shop, who may purchase 5s. worth of potatoes or vegetables shall have a commission of 2d. on that amount. Would you not pass by on the other side and take especial care to have no dealings at his shop? Would you not naturally say to yourselves,—'If that man sold a good article, if he was true to his word in his dealings, if he never cheated anybody, if he had not committed foul acts of bankruptcy, or probably of robbery, he would not be under the necessity of offering bribes to obtain customers?' I want you, and those small capitalists who are invited to put their £10 into this raffle, where there are no prizes, to bear in mind that we do not think that our meeting will convert any of those bankers or agents, or brokers, whether in Amsterdam or Vienna, who have been called on to find out unworthy people, and get them to subscribe their 25,000 florins. We never expected to convert them,

to find one on this platform. We expect that all those organs of the press which are under the influences of these parties,—and they are not a few,—we expect that they will not meet what I now say by argument, but they will do what they are bid to do and to say, and will abuse me well. It is to those small capitalists, of whom I was speaking,—the unwary, the incautious, and the uninformed class—that I wish to speak the voice of warning; and if they will listen to me I will give them the opportunity of testing the opinion of the great capitalists with respect to this loan. Messrs Hope & Company, of Amsterdam, the agents for the loan, have offered it on such terms as, if carried out, would pay £5, 14s. per cent. interest. Now, I would advise some canny Dutchman to go to the counting-house of Messrs Hope & Company, and say this to them,—‘You have offered to me to take part in a loan by which I should get £5, 14s. per cent. interest; that is nearly twice as much interest as we get in Amsterdam in an ordinary way; we should be content with 4 per cent. interest, if it were secure; I propose to take £1000 of your loan, and I will be content to receive 4 per cent. interest, and give you the remaining £1, 14s., if you will endorse my bond as a guarantee for the payment.’ No, no; the firm are not likely to be done in that way, you may depend upon it. It is not on mere economical grounds, or on grounds of self-interest alone that I oppose these loans; I come here to oppose the very system on which they are founded. What is this money wanted for? Austria, with her barbarian consort, has been engaged in a cruel and remorseless war; and the Austrian Government comes now and stretches forth her blood-stained hand to honest Dutchmen and Englishmen, and

asks them to furnish the price of the devastation which has been committed. For there is little difference whether the money subscribed to this loan be furnished a little before or after. The money has been raised for the war by forced contributions and compulsory loans, for which Treasury receipts have been given in the confident expectation that this loan would be raised to pay them off. I consider that this is on principle most unjust and indefensible. Happily, by the ordinance of divine Providence, war is in its nature self-destroying; and, if a country which carried on war were left to itself, war must have a speedy termination. But this system of foreign loans for warlike purposes, by which England, Holland, Germany and France are invited to pay for the arms, clothing and food of the belligerents, is a system calculated almost to perpetuate the horrors of war, and they who lend money for these purposes are destitute of any one excuse by which men try to justify to their own consciences the resort to the sword. They cannot plead patriotism, self-defence, or even anger, or the lust of military glory. No! but they sit down coolly to calculate the chances to themselves of profit or loss in a game in which the lives of human beings are at stake. They have not even the pleasure—the savage and brutal gratification, which ancient and pagan people had, when they paid for a seat in the amphitheatre to witness the bloody fights of gladiators in the arena. I wish, in conclusion, that it should be borne in mind by capitalists everywhere that there are times when it behoves them to remember that property has its duties as well as its rights. I exhort, then, the friends of peace and the friends of disarmament throughout the civilised world to exert themselves

to spread a sounder morality on this question of war loans ; and they will teach the capitalists of the world that they who forget those duties are running the risk of endangering those rights.

XXV.

MR SALIS SCHWABE to Mrs RICH on 'Competition, Association and Socialism.' 1850.

CRUMPSALL HOUSE, 14th March 1850.

MY DEAR MRS RICH,—I have read with great interest your letter to my wife on the subject of 'Competition and Association.' No doubt, the inequalities of men's conditions in life, and, above all, in large and populous towns, must strike us forcibly, and nothing is more natural than to look abroad for some great remedy. I believe that Mr Mills and other political economists lean very much to the doctrine of Louis Blanc and of other French Socialists, that 'Competition' invariably leads to the degradation and wretchedness of the working classes, and does good only to comparatively a few unscrupulous persons. It is consequently proposed to remodel society on the principle of 'Association.' I willingly admit that it is a laudable effort on the part of Mr Maurice and of other benevolent persons to get up such a scheme on behalf of such tailors and needlewomen as are distressed by the competition their large numbers create, and by the bad practice of slop-selling recently exposed by the

Commissioner of the *Chronicle*. On a limited scale, such an attempt is likely to succeed, since it is started, and will be supported by the hand of charity. But when it is proposed that the Association principle is to be carried out in every branch of trade, and that Competition is to be put an end to, I must say that, in my opinion, nothing more absurd or more mischievous could have been conceived.

The fundamental error is this, viz., that all arrangements of the kind are based upon *profits* and something like a regular *demand*. Now, suppose that trade should become interrupted, consumption should not keep pace with supply, ventures to foreign countries should turn out a loss, and, in short, think of the thousand ills which trade is daily liable to, and what becomes of your associated workmen? At present it is an everyday occurrence that masters carry on their business to a loss for a considerable period, and that without a reduction of the wages of the workmen; their large capital enables them to do so, and when times change they often retrieve their losses. But no capitalist would engage in a business on a principle of dividing profits with his workmen, even where *his* share is larger than theirs, and although he is allowed to charge interest for his capital; since he must well know that the *loss*, if *any*, must in the end be borne by himself alone. It would be next to impossible to obtain the workmen's consent to any considerable outlays; all large undertakings would have to be abandoned, and the progress of machinery would be suddenly brought to a standstill. The workman would entail liabilities and anxieties upon himself of an indefinite character, from which at present he is happily free. It requires, indeed, the free-will and energy of one individual, or that of a few who

thoroughly understand each other, to achieve any great, or even moderate things in manufactures or in matters relating to trade.

Competition is assumed by the Socialists to be an unmitigated evil, since men, in order to be able to undersell their neighbours, are said to accomplish this by grinding down their workmen's wages, and by gradually reducing the quality of the particular articles they deal in. I do not deny that this is but too often the case ; still, I believe, that amongst a very large portion of producers, there is great competition for *Excellence*; and the master is obliged to pay high wages to secure good workmen. Besides, there is little or no competition amongst the workmen themselves ; they have the right to associate for the purpose of dictating terms to their employers ; where the workmen have reason on their side, and there is a demand for their labour, the employer is almost always obliged to give in. It will hardly be denied that to Competition we are indebted for half the comforts which all classes of individuals enjoy.

The principle of sharing profits equally amongst workmen would also have this effect, that the premium on skill and industry would be taken away ; unless human nature can be suddenly transformed, the hard-working man would soon tire of labouring for his lazy or incompetent fellow-workman. The end would be that the whole mass would be deteriorated from day to day.

This is too vast a subject to be disposed of by a few brief remarks such as these. No doubt, efforts like the present, in London, on the part of workmen and poor women, aided by benevolent persons, will have a good moral effect on thoughtless, heartless masters. The *Chronicle* has done

good service in pointing out enormities which employers ought to correct. But carried too far, and attempts, if successful, to apply 'Association' as a system to the trade and manufactures of *this* or any other country would, in my opinion, result in wretchedness to the working classes, in ruin to the employers, and in total subversion of existing relations of society. I fear that France will have to undergo this calamity. But, as far as we are concerned in this country, let us take off all burdens from the industrious, or so-called lower classes, let us liberate trade more and more, reduce our national expenditure as far as safety will permit, do all in our power to make our people frugal, provident, truly religious; let us *educate* them, let the public press point out abuses wherever they may lurk, and the fearful experiment of regenerating society need not be tried.

But unsettle existing relations between employers and employed, establish association in profits, and you will soon bring about 'Communism,' or the desire to possess all things in common—a consummation which I am sure you would not wish to see attempted, and still less to be accomplished.

There was a time when social and political movements were directed by a few individuals in every nation, and the masses were but passive instruments in the hands of those persons. But since the French Revolution the masses have become the actors in the world. The power rests with them; let us, the more enlightened amongst them, beware of the impulse we give to their often ill-directed energies. You know that a snowball may produce an avalanche.

This letter has been much longer than I intended; but it may, perhaps, beguile an hour on your journey

to Paris. If you stay there till May, or the end of April, we may have a chance to meet you.

My wife has had a smart attack of influenza, but is now nearly well. With everything that is kind to yourself and the Philanthropic Circle from us both,—I am, yours faithfully, S. SCHWABE.

X X V I.

Rev. F. D. MAURICE to Mrs RICH on 'Competition, Association and Socialism.' 1850.

EPHRAIM LODGE,
MOUNT EPHRAIM, TUNBRIDGE WELLS,
March 28th, 1850.

MY DEAR MRS RICH,—I am very much obliged to you for letting me see the letter of your friend.* It expresses intelligently and benevolently the feelings and opinions of a large, respectable and powerful class of our countrymen, whose arguments and whose experience are entitled to great attention, even when they are presented in a much more dogmatical and intolerant shape. He has, you will have perceived, entirely mistaken our plan when he assumes that an association of workmen must pay all equally. There is no occasion to discuss his views of human nature or working nature, as they bear upon that point, because, with the exception (I believe, but am not sure) of Louis Blanc, I do not know that any supporter of Co-operation urges and

* Mr Salis Schwabe's letter, page 89.

recommends that course. Le Chevalier, who for twenty years has been mixed up with every Socialist thing, and has been more engaged in working them out than most, not only advocates the weekly payment of labourers according to the work they do, but thinks that the ultimate division of profits ought to follow the same rule. Little as I know about the subject, I am quite inclined to agree with your correspondent, and to acknowledge the fear of his argument against making the industrious pay for the idle. When he makes the valuable and important concession that Competition may be excessive, it seems to me that he gives up the whole question. It is not, then, the *law* upon which trade or human life is to be regulated. Let it come in under whatever modifications he thinks reasonable, it must come in as a mere makeweight or additional stimulus to act upon men who are primarily moved by some quite different inspiration. If we can settle what that inspiration is, I have no fear that we shall allow Competition all its legitimate influence, or that it will claim it for itself. At present it boasts to be the one governing motive of human beings. Reason declares—the most painful experience proves, that if it does govern, it is destructive of society ; that it sets up every individual against his neighbour. The good master, by your correspondent's showing, is the one who allows least influence to the principle of Competition in determining his own acts towards the workmen and the one who is most careful that he shall rule Competition, making it, as he says, a competition for excellence instead of cheapness, and that Competition shall not rule him. I accept the definition, and fully believe that the more encouragement we give to the principle of Association, the more of such good masters we shall form.

Your correspondent thinks so too, only he tacitly encourages the workmen to associate for strikes instead of for labour. I apprehend—speaking, of course, in profound ignorance, and merely from common sense—that every successful strike tends to give to workmen a very undue and dangerous sense of their own power and a very alarming contempt for their employer, and that every unsuccessful strike drives them to desperate and wild courses. By urging them to direct their passion for Association, which can never cease among them, and is just now especially rampant, into a different channel, I think we are favouring the cause of order, diminishing the rage against capital, and helping the manufacturers much more than they will help themselves if they merely raise a wild cry against Socialism.

There is much, no doubt, as a very distant and ultimate consideration in what your correspondent says about the impossibility of large enterprises with present loss being risked by associations of mere workmen. We certainly shall not be able, if we wished it, to apply the principle, except to those trades which do not require those long waitings for returns, which merely lead to extravagant and ruinous speculations. If a healthy tone is restored to those occupations by the unspeculative labourer having the main interest in them, I must think that the benefit to morality will be very considerable. If great commercial enterprises require the co-operation and predominance of the capitalist, as I am not at all disposed to deny that they do, then the capitalist will find his proper field. He will be obliged, I believe, in due time, to admit his workmen to a share of his profits; but I question exceedingly whether he will find those workmen at all disposed to controvert his

judgment about the best way of realising ultimate advantages, if he gives them an adequate support commensurate to their services—such support, of course, to be deducted from their future gains. In the meantime, so far as I can observe, the workmen are most glad—only too glad—to defer to the experienced and intelligent capitalist, if they see that he has their interest at heart as well as his own. The principle of Association, I am convinced, has taken too strong a hold of the minds of the working classes for any power directly to fight against it. It may be worked well or ill, destructively or savingly. It seems to me that every man is bound to ask himself—every member of the middle or manufacturing class especially—what can we do to lessen the present evils? etc., etc.

F. D. MAURICE.

XXVII.

Mr SALIS SCHWABE to Mrs RICH on ‘Competition,
Association and Socialism.’ 1850.

CRUMPSALL HOUSE, 6th April 1850.

MY DEAR MRS RICH,—You wish me to give you my opinion on the statements contained in your reverend friend's letter.* No one can for a moment mistake his sincere desire to apply some

* Rev. F. D. Maurice's letter, page 93.

remedy to the distress which surrounds him in your vast Metropolis, only, I think, he is pursuing a shadow, and much worse than this, he is doing great mischief. As a small proof of what I advance, I send you a number of *The Leader*, a weekly paper, which has just appeared. Pray read the article headed 'Christian Socialism,' in which your reverend friend's pamphlet is lauded and considered an important event. Read farther the first leading article and the letters on 'Open Council.'

Your reverend friend's reply to my letter may be summed up in a very few words, viz. :—'Socialism is amongst us, is spreading daily, you had better submit at once, there is no use in fighting against it.' Now, the first question to decide is the following one: Is Socialism a good or an evil? If the former, let us support it, if the latter, let us lift up our voices against it. Since your reverend friend appears to me to have some doubts upon the subject, you may, perhaps, prevail upon him to pause before he continues to give the system the aid of his position and his name. He cannot but have observed the dread which the but too probable advent of the Socialists to power has produced in France. Nor is this dread ill-founded. In such matters the misguided multitude does not halt midway. It is neck or nothing. It is, in fact, the yearning after total equality, in rights and in goods, aided by the ignorance of the masses, goaded on by dreamers and designing men, which is endeavouring to find a vent in some way.

For years the minds of the people have been unsettled in France by Socialist and Communist writers. The Republic has been the result. Republican Institutions having been attained, nothing can be more natural than that Socialism should

attempt to rule the State. Is your reverend friend prepared to see a similar result arrived at in this country? I take it for granted he is not. Well, then, let him beware how he helps to bring forth this 'Frankenstein.'

I cannot agree with your correspondent that I have given up any question by allowing that Competition may be, and is, frequently carried too far. We might say as much of everything, however good in itself. Competition neither can nor ought to be prevented. It is inherent in human nature and in human institutions; to paint it as a monster which controls and swallows up everything is a gross exaggeration.

Suppose all the journeymen tailors in London should form themselves into associations, similar to the one just started, would the fifty or sixty associations thus formed not very soon enter into keen competition with each other? Nay, would not the benevolent persons, now soliciting support for the *one* association, soon have to compete with the caterers for the rival associations? The result would be precisely similar to the present one, low prices would rule until the number of tailors had *decreased*, or the demand for their labour had *increased*.

Whenever Competition is found to be excessive and injurious, let Christianity and its divine precepts step in and correct such evils as are within the power of man to correct. Then Christianity would play a far nobler part than when its holy name is associated with 'Socialism,' that subtle poison which is now being instilled into the minds of our people.

—Believe me, my dear Mrs Rich, yours faithfully,

SALIS SCHWABE.

XXVIII.

NOTES by Mr SALIS SCHWABE after his visit to Paris in 1850, with an Account of his Interviews with Lamennais, Girardin, Cormenin, Chevalier, Bastiat, Carnot, Guizot and Lamartine.

The visit which I have just made to Paris has taken place under rather remarkable circumstances, and I have been thus induced to take a few notes of my intercourse with men well conversant with the affairs of that extraordinary country, France, which seems destined to serve as a warning and example to other countries. I was particularly anxious to ascertain what was meant by '*Socialism*,' and how far it might hereafter influence the social and political relations of England. Now, although all the leading men in France whom I have seen treat it more as a speculation than a fact, still it cannot be denied that the minds of all the lower classes in France, and those of a considerable portion of the upper classes as well, have been imbued with the notion, almost amounting to a conviction, that the distribution of property and income exists altogether upon a wrong basis; that it ought to be changed by law, so as to place food and raiment, along with all the necessaries of life, at the command of every individual who is willing to give his labour in return; and they believe that this could be easily accomplished, were it not for the cupidity of the larger portion of the upper classes, and for the spirit of competition, which tends so much, in the opinion

of the masses, to lower wages and grind them down to the dust.

The Socialist candidates in France appear, then, as the friends of humanity. It is easy for them, and for their journals, to inflame and rouse the passions of the multitude without bringing forward any specific plan for accomplishing what they propose to do. On the other hand, the Conservatives, consisting of persons holding all kinds of opinions, such as Legitimists, Orleanists, Napoleonists, etc., are in dread of some calamity, mysteriously hanging over them, without their having a chance of fairly grappling with their opponents.

All these parties look to the possession of political power as to the one thing needful, without any clear idea of what they are to do with it when got. Socialism, by the Conservatives, is synonymous with spoliation, nor can, in my opinion, the adjustment of differences in fortune, such as the Socialists profess to aim at, be carried out in any other way. Nobody has come forward to propose anything tangible, such as a reduction of the army, the extension of commerce, the stimulating of industry by the abolishing of prohibitory laws, or by the gradual withdrawal of protection, etc.

A small knot of sound political economists does exist, who are perfectly aware that this is the only way by which general prosperity, as far as possible, may be brought about; but, unfortunately, such men as M. Chevalier, Frederick Bastiat, Horace Say, are no speakers, and have not been able by their writings to make any great impression upon the minds of the people. They have, nevertheless, done much towards reducing ultra-Socialists such as Proudhon, etc., to comparative silence. Witness Bastiat's correspondence with Proudhon on 'Interest

and Capital.' It is scarcely credible that the former could gravely assert that no capitalist was entitled to interest on his capital. Lamennais and Carnot, however, still retain their ridiculous notions of credits on material and moral security. All such matters would be comparatively harmless, were it not within the range of possibility that the Socialist party might attempt to carry out their plans by *law*, and thus do more mischief in two months than years could repair.

SALIS SCHWABE.

L'Abbe de Lamennais.

He told us that the present attempt of the Government to alter the electoral law was much to be deplored. The people are contented and tranquil, but the Conservatives are stirring them up to rebellion. As my inquiries were chiefly directed to the subject of Socialism, he entered at great length into that question. He declared that there exists neither plan nor system in Socialism, but that it meant nothing more nor less than the amelioration of the state of the lower classes of society. He said that formerly society was divided into three classes, viz., the Nobility, the Clergy, and the *tiers État*; that the former two had for centuries *mis à profit* the latter class, but that the *tiers* had again been divided into two classes, *la bourgeoisie* and *les ouvriers*, or, rather, masters and workmen. The masters had kept all comforts and good things to themselves, and had become powerful. The mass is suffering. To remedy this, two things are required, viz., that there should be gratuitous instruction to everybody; that the right of combination should be conceded to the workmen as it has been

to the master. All this is reasonable enough ; but now comes the point. The workman wants capital, and cannot obtain it since he can give no *securité materielle*, but only moral security. He therefore requires assistance, and it is proposed to establish banks or *caisses*, who are to advance the money to moral men. Every workman is to belong to some association, who are to take only good moral men as members, and this association is to become security for each member. How these banks are to be established, and where the money was to come from, I could not learn. Lamennais said there was no danger to be apprehended from any of these doctrines and schemes in towns ; but he acknowledged that the minds of the peasantry were much unsettled ; that they had the notion that the soil, the mansions of the proprietors, etc., belonged properly to the people. It was not quite improbable that at some time not far distant a kind of jacquerie might ensue, but that the superior intelligence of the townspeople would soon prompt them to put this jacquerie down. Small comfort this !

Lamennais is a little, rather infirm old man, but full of intelligence and vivacity.

He spoke very much against *usure*, by which I conceive he meant mortgages secured upon land, which he seemed to object to as making the landed proprietors very helpless and dependent.

Our time was so very limited that it would have been unreasonable to have interrupted his very fluent discourse ; but I should have liked to have had his views further explained, and have asked : Whether, if a person purchased property for 100,000 francs, paying the price by borrowing 50,000 francs which he made a burden upon it, the claim of the usurer advancing the 50,000 francs was as good morally

and politically for the interest and *share* to be paid to him as the person who purchased the land with the aid of his 50,000 francs ?

Afterwards I had a short interview with *Emile de Girardin*. He is a man of about forty-five, full of intelligence. He told me that he was formerly opposed to the English Alliance, but since February 1848 his opinions had changed in that respect; England, however, must keep somewhat pace with social reforms. He also characterised the new measures of Government as those of provocation, but he thought the people would remain quiet. My interview with him was very short, and not interesting, as he was evidently very *préoccupé*.

Monsieur de Cormenin.

A man of about fifty-six, who is said to have contributed a good deal towards the fall of Louis Philippe by writing down his Government. He spoke incessantly for half an hour. He declared that France was quite directed by the *imprévu*, that the population of Paris was the most '*spirituel*' in the world, but that they, like all other Frenchmen, had an innate love for steel and gunpowder; so that a workman sitting quietly at his work, on hearing shots fired in the streets, would take his gun and join in the affray, without caring much on which side he fought; that should the *Rouges* gain the day by an *émeute* again, they would at once enlist people all over France, send them to the frontiers, and declare war to all existing Governments; that they would not rest till they had a circle of Republics all around them. That there never was a time when it was more absurd to at-

tempt a Peace Congress; peace never could find many honest adherents in France. The great misfortune for France was the total want of religion, and the little morality that existed amongst the inhabitants. While he attributed to the people of Paris more *esprit* than to all the world besides, he said they had no self-restraint, no prudence, and were moved so much by imaginative impulses, that no person could anticipate to what length they would go. In England, he said, you can calculate what persons will do in certain events, but you cannot anticipate what Parisians will do. In the event of the success of the Red Republicans, he supposed they would form in each district which was most favourable to them a sort of *dépôt* or small army, ready to invade any given country. For instance, as I understand him, in Brabant, one district was to be formed, in Prussia another, in Germany a third, in Poland a fourth, in Piedmont a fifth, and so on, and that the Red Republican armies would declare war and move forward when they were best prepared. I do not know that the above details are exactly Cormenin's words, but they contain the import of what he said, and it must be confessed that, according to common accounts, he had an excellent opportunity at the commencement of the present Republic of being well informed as to similar movements which seem to have been commenced and attempted, especially in Brabant, Piedmont and Italy. His conversation was very interesting, and I should like to be better acquainted with his writings. I understood him to say that until he came into the Assembly at forty years of age, he had not directed his attention much to political matters.

Michael Chevalier and F. Bastiat both agreed



that there was neither system nor sense in Socialism. That certainly evils existed which ought to be remedied, and that the middle and higher classes ought to get rid of the *sécheresse de cœur*, and of their indifference with regard to the working classes; that there existed gross ignorance of the first principles of sound political economy among *all* classes in France, and that the *Imprévu* may one day sweep all protective and destructive notions away, as events march swiftly in France.

Bastiat particularly condemned the measures of the Government.

He gives the following definition of Socialism:—Formerly the higher and middle classes had privileges of various kinds by protective laws, by usurping all places of emolument, etc., and thus robbed the lower classes; but now the attempt is to be made to improve the condition of the lower classes by passing laws to reduce riches, to advance capital to working men, etc., which can only be done by first killing the goose which lays the golden eggs, and then by preying upon each other.


Chevalier says that in every society there are numerous persons who do not wish to work, who are devoid of morality and good conduct and intelligence, and who accuse society of this want of success. These persons are desperate and ready for anything. Then others, again, are desirous of improving the condition of society by giving up some of their particular advantages. A third party, who are well off, do not wish to be troubled about anything, and treat all discussions of the kind as an attempt at revolution.

As to France, it is possible that, after some years, she may again become a Monarchy, that at present, however, there is no chance for it; the

three parties of Legitimists, Orleanists and Bonapartists would never agree about it; besides which, the Republic *exists*, and has not had a fair chance. I do not perfectly understand how Chevalier and Bastiat defined the protective and destructive notions which might be swept away by the *imprévu*, nor can I say how far they were decidedly adverse or inclined to yield somewhat to passing laws to reduce riches, to advance capital to workmen, etc., but I understood Chevalier to be adverse to anything of the sort. His view of Free Trade seems very limited if he thinks it right to commence by stimulating native industry by means of protection. What cause can be more unjust and injudicious than first to encourage production by means of protection, and then to ruin those who have been induced to trust to protection by abandoning it. His notions of the two kinds of credits seem very unworthy of a person of his intelligence. In a certain sense, there are these two kinds of credit in every country, for instance, in England and Scotland. The cash credits given by banks in Scotland stand very much on moral security, but it is always more or less combined with the supposed material security of the person, and the sureties who are given in the bond. Such matters ought to rest on practical rather than metaphysical distinctions. Why distinguish the moral security from the solvency of the person entering into the obligation?

Guizot.

Guizot received me with great politeness, and inquired much after the effect which Sir Robert Peel's Free Trade measures had produced in our



neighbourhood. He is evidently favourably impressed with the labours of the Free Trade party. We spoke much about the state of Spain, which he considered prosperous, and likely to remain so under the Government of Narvaez.

De Lamartine

received me most kindly, and expressed great admiration for Mr Cobden. He said that he was most anxious for Free Trade, and would have gladly done something for it when he was in power, but it was quite impossible; he had enough to do to repress measures for still greater restrictions and prohibitions. He hoped, however, that two or three years would produce some great and favourable change in that respect. He then entered into the present state of France. He quite disapproved of the recent proceedings of Government; he had seen many of the popular leaders in Paris, and had, he believed, succeeded in calming them; he thought they would remain quiet. He had told them that, at all events, they had not the least chance of success, and would inevitably ruin the cause of Liberty.

He deplored the utter want of great statesmen in France. The military system is bad enough; but worse and more dangerous still is the system of Jacobinism which exists, and which prompts all classes of men to reign through the means of *terror*. He laughed at the various plans of the Socialists, and said that, supposing Ledru Rollin and the worst Socialists were to be at the head of Government for a fortnight, their whole fabric of Socialism would fall to the ground.

XXIX.

LETTER from Mr COBDEN to his WEST RIDING CONSTITUENTS on Foreign Policy. *17th July 1850.*

LONDON, *July 17.*

DEAR SIR,—I received your letter, dated June 26th, and signed by ten electors of the West Riding, requesting me to vote in favour of Mr Roebuck's motion. My reply was purposely delayed until the political atmosphere had cleared itself from the storms with which it was at that time disturbed, in order that I might ensure a calm and unimpassioned reception to my answer. I regret that a sense of duty to my constituents and my own conscientious convictions compelled me to oppose your wishes, and to separate myself for the moment from nearly all those political friends with whom I usually act: I say a sense of duty to my constituents, because I believed that I had their hearty sanction for the views I entertained respecting the foreign policy of the country—views which I fully explained at the Wakefield and other important meetings. At the opening of the present Session I felt myself sustained and encouraged by the conviction that the largest and most powerful constituency of the kingdom was favourable to the substitution of a more humane and confiding system for that spirit of antagonism and defiance which had hitherto characterised the intercourse of nations. The cheers with which the great delegate meeting at Wakefield pledged itself and pledged me to a continued ad-

vocacy of international arbitration and a mutual reduction of armaments were still fresh in my memory, when the news arrived that a fleet of fifteen British ships of war were blockading the coast of Greece, followed by the intelligence of the refusal, by our Government, of the French offer of arbitration, and the tidings of the diplomatic protests which had been made against our conduct by the representatives of nearly every part of Europe.

From the moment that it was known that fifteen ships of war were assembled in the Bay of Salamis to enforce upon the Greek Government a disputed claim of a few thousand pounds, I became anxious to have the opportunity of renewing my motion in favour of arbitration treaties, and of bringing forward that case as a powerful illustration in support of my argument. In conversation with my friend, Mr Bright, I repeatedly expressed my intention to make the Greek affair my main argument, and thus give practical direction to the debate. From Easter till Midsummer I scarcely missed one opportunity of balloting for a day to bring on my motion, but with such an uniformity of ill-luck as at last to draw sympathising smiles from the Speaker and the Clerk at the table.

In the meantime Lord Stanley gave notice of a motion condemnatory of the conduct of the Government in the affair of Greece. No sooner was the decision of the Lords known than it was felt that the existence of the Government depended upon their verdict being reversed by the Commons.

And now appeared the cloven foot of party in its most hideous deformity. To ensure the desired result the cry was raised that the Greek motion was part and parcel of a 'foreign conspiracy.' A large party in the Lords, with Lords Stanley and Aber-

deen at their head, were charged with forming part of a gang of conspirators, whose confederates were spread over Russia, France and Austria. Now, that we can look back calmly at this party device, we must admire the audacity of its inventor. I confess the success of the cry astonished me. In the first French revolution it required torrents of the best blood of the country to be shed on the scaffold to lay the ghost of a 'foreign conspiracy.' In our own history of the disgraceful latter half of the seventeenth century we find plots without number attributed by their inventors to the agency of foreign conspirators. But they were epochs when free institutions were in their infancy. I thought we had reached a political maturity which would have enabled us to look steadily at such raw-head-and-bloody-bones, and detect the scooped turnip and white sheet out of which they are manufactured. But the plot succeeded, and it was in the midst of the excitement caused by the cry of a foreign conspiracy, by threats of dissolution, and of the resignation of the Ministry, that Mr Roebuck's motion was brought forward. This resolution called on the House not only to approve the proceedings of our Government in Greece, but to express its approbation of their foreign policy generally. The main object of his motion, be it always remembered, was to reverse the vote of the House of Lords, and I was thus practically called on to approve the refusal of French arbitration, and the employment of fifteen ships of war in the Bay of Salamis, for the collection of a debt of a few thousand pounds.

And now comes the question, was I justified in adhering to my principles after they had been made the battle ground for the Tory opposition? Admit-

ting, for the sake of argument, that Lord Stanley was merely following the tactics of an Opposition leader—that he was seeking for a favourable position from which to assail the party in power—that, having observed the great meetings which we had held in Yorkshire and Lancashire in favour of an improved and more civilised mode of settling international disputes—that having seen how I was pledged at the great delegate meeting at Wakefield to renew my advocacy of arbitration treaties—that believing the advocates of a reduction of armaments and of financial reform to be in earnest—and seeing that the conduct of the Government in Greece was violating our principle of arbitration and thwarting our projects for a reduction of armaments—that, seeing all this, Lord Stanley, looking around for popular support, determined to make the Greek affair the battle-ground of party. I will admit, for the sake of argument, that he had no higher motives for his motion than to carry a vote, with our aid, in condemnation of the proceedings of the Government in Greece; and, after admitting all this, the question remains, ought I to have adhered to my principles under such circumstances? I am told that there are some of my friends in Yorkshire and Lancashire who think I ought not to have walked into the same lobby with the Tories. They cannot have been members of the League who say so. Would the Corn Laws have ever been abolished if we had not had men in our front ranks who were proof against the old war-cry of Whig and Tory? Such a doctrine may suit cliques and clubs, but what would the great public say to it?

Try one of your large meetings with a resolution affirming that your representative ought to abandon his principles rather than endanger the Government

by voting with the Tories, and one indignant 'No' will be the response.

Looking calmly back at the course I took on Mr Roebuck's motion, I can conscientiously say that I never gave a vote upon which I could reflect with more unalloyed satisfaction.

My political friends who took a different course may have been at liberty to do so because they have not taken a prominent part in the advocacy of the principles involved, or they may not have felt as I did the importance of the question.

But with all my speeches and writings upon record, I should have been a hypocrite and something worse if I had not recorded my vote in opposition to Mr Roebuck's motion.

It is not my intention to enter upon the discussion of the great question of our foreign policy involved in the late debate. A few words must suffice until we have other and better opportunities of renewing the topic. Without egotism, I may perhaps say that few Englishmen have had better opportunities of learning the effect of our foreign policy upon other countries than myself. I travelled throughout Europe under the rare circumstances of having free access, at the same time, to the Courts and Ministers and to the popular leaders of the Continental states. I came back convinced that the interference of our Foreign Office in the domestic affairs of other countries worked injuriously for the interests of those towards whom all my sympathies were attracted—I mean the people—by exciting exaggerated hopes, encouraging premature efforts, and teaching reliance upon extraneous aid, when they ought to be impressed with the necessity of self-dependence. I found, too, that the principle of intervention, which we sanctioned by our example,

was carried out by other Governments in opposition to ours, without scruple, and with at least equal success to ourselves.

But it is not merely to the interests of foreigners that we should look, even if successful. I should doubt the justice of burdening our people with the expense (for the system is an expensive one) of undertaking, through our Government, to influence the doctrines of other nations. The more I have seen of foreign countries the less do I partake of the comfortable delusion that we are placed at such an immeasurable height above all other races, creeds, and languages, that their progress and liberties depend entirely upon our fostering care and assistance. It is gratifying to our self-love to be told that 36,000,000 Frenchmen, 40,000,000 Germans, 60,000,000 Prussians, and 20,000,000 Italians look to us for assistance to emancipate them from tyranny, and that without our countenance they must remain for ever in their present state of degradation. I am sorry to say it, but the mass of our labouring population, if we include in the average the Irish paupers and our rural peasantry, have very little reason to boast of their condition, as compared with the mass of the people on the Continent. I am therefore for keeping the attention of the Government directed to home questions, and for testing their merits by their home policy. I am opposed to the principle of making them in any way responsible for the good government of foreigners; and upon the same principle I will never consent to make the proffered liberality of their foreign policy the ground of popular support in this country. And whilst I would thus limit the functions of Government to its proper duties and responsibilities, I yield to no one in the warmth or width of my sympathies, as an individual

for the progress of human liberty and happiness throughout the whole world.—Apologising for the length of this letter, I remain, dear sir, your obedient servant,

RICHARD COBDEN.

C. HIRST and Others.

XXX.

Mr COBDEN'S SPEECH at the PEACE CONGRESS,
held at Frankfort, 22d August 1850.

IT was not my intention to have addressed a word to this Conference to-day, having in reserve a few words upon another resolution to-morrow. But the question of Arbitration being the subject of discussion, and having taken some part elsewhere in the consideration of that question, and some dispute having been raised on the present occasion as to its practicability, I wish just to utter one or two words upon the subject. The resolution we propose to pass at present goes thus far and no farther: We say to the Governments and diplomatists of the world,—‘If you can find no other means of settling your differences, if all your attempted negotiations should have failed, if diplomacy confesses itself to have exhausted all its resources in vain—then we say, in preference to calling in the arbitrage of the sword, we ask you to refer the dispute at issue to some intelligent umpires, who shall settle the matter before them.’ We do not want to interfere with

diplomatists if they can settle the dispute without referring to us; but we say we are tired and disgusted with the old mode of calling in men with swords by their sides and bayonets over their shoulders to decide such matters, which should be left to reason and justice. Now, we bring the diplomatists of the world—the Governments of the civilised world—to this issue with us: ‘Will you have war, or will you have Arbitration?’ We say,—‘You tell us you are as much opposed to war as we; you deride us as children running up and down declaring and preaching mere truisms, sentiments upon which all the world are agreed. Well, then, we say, if we are agreed, will you support our plan to settle those disputes which may be raised between nations, and which your own diplomatists have taken in hand to settle themselves?’ It is done in private life continually. Why, scores and hundreds of British Acts of Parliament have been passed requiring that such disputes should be settled by Arbitration. The members of our Houses of Parliament do not doubt the possibility of individuals finding the means of subjecting private matters to Arbitration; and I say plainly, the principle you find good for individuals in every case, without exception, you will find good for nations—because, never let it be forgotten that the intercourse of nations is the intercourse of individuals; that the interests of nations are the interests of individuals in the aggregate—and you cannot find a better plan in dealing with nations than that which is found successful in dealing with the intercourse of individuals. I say it is not necessary we should have a tribunal erected to assert in all cases measures of Arbitration, for when you have come to that point (I am now speaking to diplomatists), when you cannot settle a

dispute, we hold you responsible for referring that dispute to Arbitration; and if you tell us—you, indeed, whom we pay so well—whom we pay so largely for your trouble, and I speak now in the name of the people—if you tell us that you cannot find the means of referring the dispute to the arbitration of reasonable individuals that are living in different parts of the world—if you tell us that you cannot find a Humboldt in Germany, a Bancroft in America, or a Lamartine in France, capable of adjusting a dispute which hinges upon a question of etiquette or a matter of a few thousand pounds—if you cannot find means of adjusting such a matter without calling upon us, or after looking about you for arbitrators, I say make way, gentlemen, for some other diplomatists, who will do the work of the nations of the world, for which you are so well paid, in a more workmanlike manner. I now come, gentlemen, to the practical way of getting our purpose secured—of compelling our Governments to adopt this principle—and I address myself particularly to English and American citizens, because we have by experience found out the practical mode of acting upon Governments and our own. Find me, in America or in England, a few resolute, persevering men of principle, having hold of a principle, and capable of teaching the justice of it, and I will tell them the way they can force their Governments to carry out the great principle. When you find your Governments coming before you with the details of a dispute which they have raised with some other country, and which has resulted in a blockade, or in something very like a war, then call that Government, or their diplomatists, to account when they trouble you to settle their accounts by a resort to physical force. Call them to account

when they have not settled that matter by Arbitration ; and if your Governments have had occasion to deal with weaker Governments than themselves, weaker Governments which may have applied for Arbitration, because you are stronger than they, and may have sought for reason and for justice ; if your Governments, whether American or English, have blockaded the coasts of Portugal or the coasts of Greece, then I say visit these Governments, visit these diplomatists with the greatest amount of displeasure, remove them far from you as an atonement for their mistakes. That is the course I am prepared to take in my country. I ask the American citizens to do the same thing ; and I beg to tell them that, if they will do their duty in this respect, they will not find fifteen ships of war sent out to Portugal to obtain a debt of six hundred pounds. I am now referring to what is passed. I must say a word about the future, and take this opportunity of speaking to our enemies, as they may be called, in so far as the war spirit is concerned. They say we are Utopians ; but I say I have seen great progress in public opinion within the last twelve months. I have seen when a Government has made a false step, has refused Arbitration, and has striven to oppress a weaker power ; I have seen one party over whom the power of custom is greater than reason, back up that Government, but at the same time I have seen, with infinite satisfaction, that another party, constrained by a sense of justice, and believing that a new spirit, a new principle, has taken birth in England, has risen up and told us that we should have a jury of nations—one-half of them foreigners, and the other half of them Englishmen—so that the case may not be prejudged, or reason overcome, and that we may not assert to

ourselves the right of settling our own quarrels by an appeal to force, that the weakness of another state may be overcome. Both in the House of Commons and in the House of Lords this party has taken up the question; and I say let us, at all events, establish this principle, whether other nations seek it or not—let us be the first to offer a measure of justice. Can you find anything better? Is there anyone here who would prefer war to Arbitration? If not, let us offer justice instead of war; and, I repeat, if our rulers will not do so, let us repudiate and overthrow that Government. I say, we have progress in England, but I must also add that I have seen progress since mixing with this assembly. Among the visitors to-day is a stranger of considerable distinction, whom I little expected to meet at a Peace Congress; but it shows that the principles are making way, even among the heads of military power. The last great meeting I attended in England, I found myself side by side with General Klapka, and now I feel myself almost shoulder to shoulder with General Haynau. Now, I really begin to think, when we see the two leading generals who were recently opposed to each other, coming to Peace Meetings and Peace Congresses—I begin to entertain no doubt that the world is opening its eyes to the justice of our principle. These generals themselves seem not to be perfectly satisfied, whether they are victors or whether they belong to the vanquished, they seem not to be quite satisfied in their own minds of the righteousness of their cause when they attend the congresses of the friends of peace. Now, it is not likely that any of our peace friends will pay a visit to General Haynau in his camp. I wish to say nothing which would deter the distinguished leaders of our

opponents, as we must call them, from the progress of opinion; but I must say that General Haynau and General Klapka were amongst the last men I thought we should have converted. I take this as a sign of progress, of that progress which is safe and sure when founded upon those principles which have been laid down at the meeting to-day, founded upon the common interests and the common humanity of all living men. When I came up the Rhine, I saw what you have all seen, where the two great rivers unite their waters, a turbid stream falling down into the brighter blue of the other, resisting for a time the destruction of its distinguishing characteristic. I thought of the progress of the peace principle. Although the different nations of Europe have distinctions of religion and of language, of habits and of instincts, yet, like these rivers, they have all one common origin, and one common destiny, and one common Creator. They therefore tend to one common end, to one common Father, to the same ocean of eternity. Yes, I have no doubt that their ultimate destiny is to unite and mingle in one common stream, and to present themselves before the world in one undistinguishable body.

XXXI.

MR COBDEN TO CHEVALIER BUNSEN.

MIDHURST, 3^d October 1850.

MY DEAR CHEVALIER BUNSEN,—I am in a very retired farmhouse with my family, ten miles from a railway, and had no intention of returning to London for some weeks. If, however, I thought that my presence in town could prevent one musket from being fired in Schleswig, I would walk up barefoot. But it appears to me that all I have to say may be conveyed as well by letter as *viva voce*. If you can induce your friend Gurney publicly to identify himself with the practical steps taken by Sturge and his colleagues in the Schleswig-Holstein affair; if you can induce him, for instance, to say that, as the Schleswig-Holstein party have declared their willingness to abide by Arbitration, the Danes will be responsible for all the bloodshed and injury to commerce which may hereafter accrue if they refuse the offer, he will do more to stop the jeers of *The Times* than anything that could be done. *The Times* loves to be regarded as the organ of the moneyed class, and Gurney is the leader of that class. *The Times* will, therefore, not fail to treat with seriousness any opinion emanating from him. Can you induce him to write a short, emphatic letter to *The Times* approving the course taken by Sturge and his friends, and throwing the responsibility of further hostilities upon the Danes? I confess I doubt your success. I have seen a reluctance on his part to give expressions to his convictions

at a time and in a way likely to bring odium and ridicule upon himself (as, for instance, in the case of foreign loans for war purposes, upon which he agrees with me, but is quite mute in public), which has often made me doubt whether he is fully alive to the great responsibilities attached to him, who has so many 'talents' entrusted to him. On the religious view of the question of war I have heard him speak with very great fervour. But it is not enough that we put forth, in inoffensive and general terms, our adhesion to a great principle. We must follow the example of Saint Paul, and be prepared to brave the frowns of men in power, to suffer injury from those interested in the war system (as *He* did from those interested in paganism), and, if necessary, to endure stripes and even martyrdom. Now, martyrdom in our day does not mean fighting with wild beasts at Ephesus, but leading articles in *The Times*, pooh-pooings of men of rank and wealth, and the consciousness of being for a time in a political and social minority. All this it is extremely difficult for a millionaire in Lombard Street to do, and when I think of Mr Gurney, with his native instincts, so pure, nay, almost angelic, and consider how they are neutralised, if not vitiated, for public usefulness by the corrupting atmosphere in which he passes six days of the week, I cannot help repeating the awful words, 'How hardly shall a rich man enter,' etc. I feel greatly pleased and honoured by the kind expressions of approbation you bestow on my speeches at Frankfort. As respects the views of our Government, you know I have no confidence in Palmerston; but he will endeavour to *appear* to act in a popular way, and Gurney's opinion would not be without its influence upon him.—I remain faithfully yours,

RICHARD COBDEN.

P.S.—Instead of referring the question at issue to the arbitration of English judges, I would suggest as a fit tribunal the Judges of the Supreme Court of the United States, which is a Court of Appeal for the independent State Sovereignities of the Union. Besides, as the United States are, fortunately for themselves, separated from our European system, there is no jealousy or suspicion felt towards them by European Governments.

XXXII.

Mr COBDEN'S SPEECH at the NATIONAL PUBLIC SCHOOLS ASSOCIATION'S CONFERENCE at Manchester, proposing 'Public' School Association as a preferable title to 'Secular' School Association. *October 30th, 1850.*

I do not rise to make a speech on the general subject of national education ; but I wish first to see if we can bring this question to an issue on the term 'secular.' As I introduced this subject without having conferred with anyone about it, and without any idea of its leading to a lengthened controversy, I may say once for all, that I had no hidden thoughts or designs in proposing the alteration. I did not intend that there should be any alteration in the objects of the Association. The question is simply the change of the word, because I think that the using of the word 'secular' is calculated to place you in active antagonism to religious teaching, and

all you want is to appear neutral and passive in the matter. I therefore beg to submit that the 'public' might be substituted for 'secular.' That will include everybody—all the members, and all those who have objected in every sect of religion. They can stand on common ground, if the term is applied to the public generally; and if gentlemen will now take my disavowal of any intention of changing the objects of the Association, there can be no disagreement as to that word. I have said I am not going into a discussion of the general question of national education. An honourable gentleman has referred to me with great eulogy, and to my name in connection with this subject, in the House of Commons. It is rather doing an injustice to an honourable gentleman in the House who has already taken this question in hand. I do not know whether Mr Fox has taken up the same ground precisely which this Association occupies. But I can answer for it, he brought forward the question of education during the last Session with great ability, and with a great deal of temper and discretion. The first speech he made, in obtaining leave to bring in his Bill, was delivered in a tone so conciliatory, and was so perfectly well taken in the House, that it was a matter of doubt with me whether he was not going to see it immediately succeed. All parties agreed in passing eulogies on the spirit and temper in which he had dealt with the subject; but, to my astonishment, on the second reading of the Bill, after it had been brought in, there was an explosion of affected bigotry and fanaticism,—I will call it so, because a great deal of it, I honestly believe, was affected—which was perfectly overwhelming. We were assailed with that storm of epithets, such as 'Infidels,' and every other unseemly name that could

be applied to men seeking a great and beneficent reform. I could hardly believe I was listening to this, in the same House and in the same atmosphere where I had listened to Mr Fox's first motion for leave to bring in the Bill. But do not let it be supposed that if I or anyone else had brought forward a similar measure it might have been better treated than Mr Fox's was. It is the uniform tactics of the House of Commons on questions of great importance and of some novelty, to receive them either with laughter and expressions of scorn, or else to overload you with epithets of 'Infidels,' 'Socialists,' or something they think will do instead of argument, and cover you with obloquy, and thereby dispose of you. I need not tell you, who have had some experience in public matters, most of you, that the only way this question can be raised in the House of Commons is by your taking it in hand in the way you are now proposing to deal with it. If you unite together in different parts of the country, and form two or three hundred associations in union with this Association in Manchester, by the time you have been a year or two at work—for I will not say you are going to do it in a hurry—with the steady application and systematic organisation to which I have referred, you will see this question treated in a very different spirit in the House of Commons. It will respond speedily to the opinions and convictions of the people out of doors. I think on this question we have some advantage in urging and agitating the matter, over any great question with which I am acquainted; because we have nobody who withstands it on the merits, or who says that education is a bad thing. Nobody says that; but I can remember,—we all remember,—when a great many people did say that, and did not hesitate to

avow it. It is now admitted to be a good thing we seek for. Scarcely anybody will say we have enough education. I can only say for myself, once for all, that I will never argue this question with those who do. If anybody brings statistics to show me that we *are* an educated people, I will let him go; I will pass by on the other side, and choose some other opponent. I will tell him to go to the man at the plough and ask him the name of the adjoining parish, or at least the name of some place three parishes beyond his own. Go to the man who is at work in your streets, and ask him to write his name, or if you find he can do that mechanically, ask him to write half a dozen lines. Go and put the simplest test to the great mass of the people, and you will find them the least instructed, the most ignorant, of any Protestant community on the face of the earth. I will therefore not argue the question with those who try to show that we are an educated people; but those who say that some system should be adopted, though not what you have laid down, I ask, what is *your* system? As to the present system, everybody is dissatisfied with that. Nobody upholds the present system. Dissenters oppose it—the Church is in convulsions over it;—we tolerate it, I along with other politicians in the House, simply because, I confess, I prefer it, with all its faults, to no education at all. But I know nobody that supports the present system. And therefore you are entering on this question with an advantage over almost any others that have embarked in a great agitation. The community admits the object you seek is desirable; nobody has a plan opposed to yours on which people will unite; the existing system, which the Government has attempted to put forth, as a proof that something is doing, is

such an utter failure that all parties and sects are ready to repudiate it ; and therefore you stand occupying the only ground, the only platform, as our American friend terms it, on which a great union can be formed to advance the education of the people. Some allusion has been made by an hon. friend of mine to my position as representative of the West Riding of Yorkshire. I hope you will give me credit, at all events, for sufficient sincerity to an old, not a new conviction, to believe that I could never allow for a moment the question of my interest in the representation of the West Riding to weigh against a sense of duty in reference to a paramount object. I say this because I may be allowed to say that I do not think, with my friend on the left, that I am making 'political capital' hereby appearing in this educational question ; for I am sorry to say that, among those who have been my warmest friends on political questions, I have found a very considerable number, and those among the most influential of the party to which I belong, who are opposed, and, I believe, conscientiously opposed, to the movement in which you are embarked. I do not disguise from you, or from myself, that the party with which Mr Edward Baines, of Leeds, unites, is a very powerful party, and it is a party acting from the highest and purest convictions, which consequently makes that party formidable in any views which they may so take up. But I must say that I think that, by allowing them a full and free discussion, and taking up this question in the candid spirit in which, I am happy to see, it has been dealt with to-day, I do not despair of seeing our friends of the West Riding—those who have taken the most prominent part among the dissenting body—joining with us in this measure, when they are

satisfied that the voluntary principle, on which they have relied, cannot be successful to carry out, to the extent we ought to carry it, the education of the people. Now, I have always felt, with reference to the voluntary principle, this—that education is not, like religion, something inherent in ourselves; we feel as a necessity the adoration of the Deity, we have a veneration for God, and a desire by every means to be acquainted with religious objects, and we have all instinctively formed some religious impressions for ourselves. I have always felt that education is a thing totally different from religion in this respect. You find no people on the face of the earth that have not got some religion, some idea of a Deity, some hopes of the future; but you do not find that people everywhere have acquired notions of reading, writing, spelling, arithmetic, geography and grammar. You do not find any traces of a nation, at least you cannot tell me of any nation or tribe that has civilised itself and taught itself the arts and sciences, or given itself the instruments of learning, without having imbibed it from some other people. And in this country you do not find, in the dark agricultural villages where everybody is unlettered, that sort of impulse or desire for education that would make a great many people spontaneously educate themselves. They do not feel the want of education,—they don't know what education is. There is no instinct springing in their minds to tell them that education will be useful to them, or that they ought to possess it. They want to have education *given* to them; they require that somebody should impart it to them; and if you leave it to voluntary effort, in most of our parishes in this kingdom you have so small a minority who have any education them-

selves, or any desire for education, that it is not likely they will set to work to impart it to other people. Now, I want to bring to these benighted parishes of theirs the principle that has been imparted to us by our excellent guest, Dr Bacon. I want a general Act passed to compel these dark spots, these benighted local regions, to rate the property of the districts to give education to the people. You will say that the proprietors will look after this education voluntarily. But have you considered this sufficiently, that if you take the country, as it is divided into parishes, you find the proprietors in three places out of four are non-resident proprietors? There is as much absenteeism in England, when you talk of parishes, as respects the proprietors, as there is in Ireland, when you talk of that whole island. It is a mistake to suppose that if every parish has a large amount of landed property in it, the proprietors are there to secure by voluntary arrangement and co-operation the education of the people there. I have been lately passing a little time in a parish in West Sussex, and I had the curiosity to look over the schedule of the valuation for the tithe commutation of the parish. The first proprietor I saw down there, who owns more than half the land, is a non-resident in the parish. There was scarcely a proprietor whose name was in that schedule who was a resident in the parish; and if you will take the schedule of any agricultural parish in the kingdom, and look at the valuation of it for the tithe commutation, you will see the list of all the names of the proprietors of the parish, and the acreage they possess; and you will be astonished to find, looking at the country in its parochial organisation, that in by far the majority of the cases the proprietors of the parish are absentees from the

parish. Well, I want to lay hold of that property, and tax it to educate the people. Don't tell me the proprietors will educate the people. I tell you they are absentees in the majority of cases; and, therefore, if anybody educates the people, it is not the right parties, but somebody that does not enjoy the property, and very likely is incompetent, and ought not to be called on to pay the burthen. As respects the difficulty of the burthen of the taxation to bear, why, our friend has told us, in the New England States, every town has its schoolhouse, and every section of a town, where the township is a large one, has its schoolhouse; hence they have to pay for all these schools in New England, but they pay less for their gaols. And if they have schoolhouses in every town, they have no barracks in every town—they pay less for their soldiers. Don't tell me of the expense of taxing us for education. There cannot be—in an economical point of view—there cannot be a more profitable outlay in the world than a system of education for the people. Why, how is it that in the United States of America you have a city like New York, larger than Manchester and Salford united, without barracks, with no horse, foot, or artillery, such as you have, to your shame and ignominy, here? To your shame and ignominy, I say, you have them here in the neighbourhood of every large town, not only (let us not disguise it from ourselves) kept here for the defence of this country against French or Americans, or anybody else; but a systematic network of barracks throughout the country, every town having its military arrangements, and notoriously, I say, to keep the peace, because we are afraid of the dense mass of ignorance that lies around us. Then, I say, tax the property of the

country to give us common schools, and you will save the money, and fivefold that expense, which you incur for gaols and for barracks, and the rest of the paraphernalia by which you must rule in ignorance the people, whom you deny the intelligence to rule themselves. Well, sir, as we have a good cause, and as we have one that can be logically defended at every point—for I am one who has great faith in logic—shall we not find even in this country men who will be willing to devote some of their time from their daily avocations to the success of this great undertaking? I feel grateful to the men of Manchester, who have gone on thus far with this question. They were bold men that launched this brave vessel in the midst of the squalls, and quicksands, and cross currents and tempests which they knew awaited her. But they have persevered, and brought the stout vessel into something like still water. They have disposed of a great deal of the arguments that were arrayed against them, and now they invite the whole community to come on board to help them to navigate it across the ocean which they have yet to pass, until they arrive at the haven of their hopes and our great success. Now, is there not to be found in this country a sufficient number of men to join in this great undertaking? We have not the ordinary stimulus of this being a party question. It is not a party question, and probably will not be made a party question; or, if it be, it will not be the men who are now going to labour in it who will make it so. It is not a question yet that has even the *animus* of the sectarian spirit to stir it up. It stands on common sense and common humanity alone; but are there not in this country men enough who, with such motives and on such grounds, will be found to co-operate in this great

question? I am sure there will be; I look to the young men to co-operate in this movement. They are the parties destined to carry on to the next generation more of virtue, intelligence and morality than exists in the present. It is to them we must look if this country is to maintain her position, not merely in rivalry with Europe, but with that young giant which has risen up in the west, and which starts, in this mutual rivalry of the nations of the world, with an immense advantage over us in that most vital of all points—education. It makes me almost shrink—it almost alarms me—when I think, even in that low point of view, the economical future, of the advantages of the inhabitants of the United States—our own race—having all our advantages, and being freed from many of our disadvantages; it makes me almost tremble for our economical future—I only speak of our prospects in a politico-economical sense, and the rivalries we have to sustain against them. And yet, though a dense population may be in some respects a disadvantage, I do not think, in organising a system of schools, it is a disadvantage. Our friend will tell you, that the great difficulty in organising schools in America lies not in the large towns but in the rural districts. We have a population here generally condensed; and there is no excuse for not bringing them into schools, because you can, with great convenience, have schools within the reach of everybody. We have, therefore, some advantage over our cousins of the west in this matter of education. It only wants that Englishmen shall do what Americans have done—that we shall have some Horace Manns in this country to devote themselves to the cause of education. We want, not only in Manchester, but elsewhere, those who will canvass

for aid. Canvassing for money, by the way, is one of the best ways of making converts and diffusing information; for, if you want to send out missionaries to get support for this Association, you will take care they must be armed with good logical arguments, before they can extort money from the pockets of their neighbours; and when you have convinced a man once that he will expend his money well in contributing to your cause, you have that man as an ally for ever. I believe there are young men willing to join in this movement, and to carry it to a successful issue. It is with this practical view I have risen to-day; I did not intend to go into argument further on this question. I can only say that, in my humble way, in the house, or out of the house, while I have health and strength, there is no question to which I will give all my health and all my strength with more cordial pleasure than to that in which you are now engaged.

XXXIII.

MR COBDEN'S SPEECH at the MEETING of the NATIONAL PUBLIC SCHOOL ASSOCIATION at Manchester. *31st October 1850.*

MR CHAIRMAN, LADIES AND GENTLMEN,—The very first occasion on which I had the honour of addressing a Manchester audience was upon a question

akin to this; it was at the foundation of the Manchester Athenæum—it was in 1835, and for more than two years after that, I think the only questions on which I ever appeared before a Manchester audience were in connection with national education. I well remember, as long as fifteen or sixteen years ago, meeting Mr Walker at the York Hotel, in an effort at that time—a passing and not a very successful one—to form a society for the promotion of general education. Now, I mention these facts, not with a view of showing my consistency in being here now, that is of very small consequence, but I wish to draw your attention to the fact that at the time I am now speaking of I had the pleasure of uniting with many gentlemen who entertain similar political sentiments with myself, and who are now not in the ranks of the advocates of national education, but are, I am afraid, rather to be ranked amongst our opponents. Now, I want to call our good friends back to their original opinions. How is it that those gentlemen, the great champions of civil and religious liberty, are not now, by an instinct of self-preservation, for the principles which they have so much at heart? How is it that they are not joining with us to advocate the enlightenment of the people, upon which alone the civil and religious liberties of the people can rest? We had a long period, from 1838 down to 1846, in which our educational efforts were suspended, and we were battling for a question nearer even, and dearer, to humanity than mental aliment—I mean the necessity of obtaining our daily bread. During that time, for seven years, the question of national education was almost forgotten; it was suspended in Manchester; but during that time circumstances occurred which tended gradually to alienate the dis-

senting body (for to them I allude) from this question. First came the notorious and constantly more prominent fact, that the large amount, by far the largest amount of the money voted annually by Parliament for purposes of education, flowed not to the dissenting body, but to the Church establishment. Now, I am not going to ask why it was so; I merely allude to the fact that tended to alienate the dissenting body from a system of national education. Then came a proposal from Sir James Graham with a Bill of Education, which roused the antagonism of the whole dissenting body throughout the country; and, I think, in an evil moment, in a moment that must be recalled by the dissenting body, in a moment of excitement and of frenzy, which of themselves are sufficient to account for the error they committed, in a moment of excitement founded upon the causes to which I have alluded, the dissenting body, at least a large and most influential portion of them, declared their hostility to the very principle of an organised system of education—I mean, of an organised system of public education. And their declaration, arising out of discontent with Sir James Graham's Bill, or with the tendency of the present votes of Parliament to flow into the exchequer of the Established Church, has nothing whatever to do with the proposal we now submit to the country. Here is a plan and a principle emanating from the society of which we form a part—here, tonight, intended for the very purpose of relieving the Dissenters from the dilemma, and removing from them the injustice under which they suffer; and we have the fullest conviction, I entertain no doubt whatever, that when our friends have the opportunity calmly and dispassionately to consider this question now submitted to them, they will, as a

body, unitedly join our ranks in advocating this system of education. For what is it we propose? Not to interfere with their religious teaching, the fundamental principle of dissent being, that they prohibit State aid for religious teaching. We say we don't propose religious teaching in our schools. As religious communities especially, they cannot appear as our opponents. As individuals, I grant they may be opposed to us, as other individuals may; but I do say that, as religious bodies, neither Baptists, nor Independents, nor Wesleyans, nor any other sect of the religious world have a right to come before us and object, on this ground, that we are doing anything inimical to their principles. I wish to draw the distinction between the right of the Dissenters to oppose us as individuals, and their rights upon any ground of common sense or propriety to attempt, as a religious body, to array themselves against the present plan of this Association. But then, some of them come forward and say that we are violating the principles of political economy in allowing a public rate to be raised for education at all. Well, again I say, it is perfectly competent for an individual member of a Baptist or Independent communion to object to my principle of a public provision for education on politico-economical grounds; but what right has a body of religionists, what right has a congregation of Baptists to come before me and use a politico-economical argument? I will reason with them, if they will, from Adam Smith; I will talk to them, if they please, as philosophers; but what right have they to come, the Bible in their hands, and attempt to oppose me on politico-economical grounds? Now, sir, one word only upon the plan upon which we propose to proceed. The gentleman who, as he rightly says, with so

much moral courage has just now been addressing us, made a remark in which I think we cannot altogether agree, when he states that our plan is one which excludes the Bible from schools. Now, what I understand by the plan of this Association is this: that it is one which does not compel the scholars in schools to read the Bible, if it is contrary to their conscientious conviction, or that of their parents, that they should read the whole Bible; but I will not be a party to the exclusion of the whole Bible from any school where the local body can unite in introducing the Bible. For instance, one-half of our parishes in this united kingdom, and a great deal more, are simply rural parishes, containing a few hundred inhabitants. In many cases there is but a parish church; and there is not a Dissenter. Now, I don't understand this to be a plan which should prevent a community like that, where all are agreed, from having the whole Bible, if they please, introduced into their schools. What I should wish to be understood is this: that while we do not pretend to say that the Bible shall be excluded from the schools anywhere else, we will not be a party to anything which says peremptorily that the Bible shall be excluded from any community of men or boys; what we do say is this, that we will not compel the reading of the Bible when that shall have the effect probably of deterring Roman Catholics or others from sending their children to the schools. Well, the objection that is raised to this plan is, that it is an irreligious plan, because we don't undertake to give religious training. That is the great obstacle which you have to contend with. The cry raised—raised on very flimsy grounds—professes that you are aiming at the establishment of an irreligious system of education; and I have

no hesitation in saying that our opponents are wise in taking that ground; for such is the tendency of the mind of this people, that no great reform was ever accomplished in this country, of which it could be alleged that it was opposed to religion; and there have been very few great reforms effected in this country in which the religious principles have not been largely called into operation to effect that change. But what is it we propose to do? Are we going to open public schools to take the children away from their parents? Why, I thought, in this country at least, we recognised the right of parents to the training of their children. Do we propose to take them away, to put them in boarding schools? Why, in all this furious outbreak against us, as irreligious, it must appear to be assumed that we had a plan by which we intended to take away from parents their children at a tender age, and wholly remove them from the influence of their counsel and example! We are talking of day schools; we are not talking of boarding schools; we are not talking of Sunday schools. Here is a plan by which you propose from six or eight hours in five days of the week—for, I dare say, you will have, at all events, a half-holiday on a Saturday—but here you propose a plan by which you intend to give to the children of this country five, or six, or eight hours of instruction in secular affairs, leaving them on Sunday to the pastor of their communion—leaving them the whole evening and night and morning in the hands of their parents. And yet the attempt is made, and widely made, for it is the only chance our opponents have of ever obstructing our movement, the attempt is made to show that the effect of this system must be to give an irreligious education. Now, I have said it before, and in this controversy, as in others,

you must repeat your arguments until you find them coming back from your very enemies. I have said it before, the first time I had the honour of addressing the Association in this town :—We pay in this country eight millions a year at least to the teachers of religion—twice as much, I will venture to say, as is paid in any Christian country on the face of the earth. We do not propose to take one shilling of that from those teachers of Christianity. We tell them they are ignorant of grammar, they are ignorant of the commonest duties of social life ; we propose to give them some instruction in these necessary matters ; and these parties—parties who belong to a system in which eight millions per annum are expended for religious training—have the effrontery to come forward and tell us that we are going to give an irreligious education. Fling that in their faces wherever you meet that sort of opposition. Put it in the logical way that my friend Dr Bacon did. I wish I was permitted to say all I know—but it would not be agreeable to him—of his departure from his own congregation ; of the high esteem in which he is held, that it would be a passport from them to you for the truth of what he says here. And Dr Bacon put this in a form—remember it, and fling it at the heads of those dishonest, or else those ignorant people. Tell them Dr Bacon said he had heard of the magnificent provision made in this country for the religious training of the people. But he said, ‘I never understood that that was to be viewed in the light of a school fund. If it be, why, then, it seems to have been very much misapplied ; and I do advise you to look to it.’ We do not propose to interfere with the religious instruction of the people. We do not propose to take a farthing from the stipends of the religious teachers ;

but we tell them that, if it be their duty to educate the people, they have grossly neglected their duty ; and even if they assume that duty, we do not propose to punish them in that way in which we might logically be allowed to do, by taking some of their stipends from them, in order to do that which they proposed to do, but did not ; but we propose to raise, by a local rate upon the property of this country, extra money, in order to do that which they themselves have failed to do. Now, I am glad we have got with us here a gentleman from the United States. I have often thought that the best way of reasoning this matter would be to identify ourselves with the New England system of education, and say that is what we want. We want that for Old England which has been for centuries applied to New England ; and now, if you are afraid of the consequences, let us see what the effect has been in the New England States. Why, their schools in the New England States have given the people an education which, compared with ours—I mean secular instruction—might well make us blush. However, our opponents probably will not deny that a system of education might give mere secular instruction ; but they say it will produce infidelity and irreligion in the land. Now, what has been the effect in New England ? Where will you find, amongst all the Protestant States of the world, a country which is, *par excellence*, a religious community, comparable with that of the New England States ? What is our number of places of worship ? They have far more churches and chapels in proportion to the population than we have. Is it observance of the Sabbath ? Why, I have been there, and I have seen a chain put across the street in a large town in the New England States, to pre-

vent traffic from interfering with religious worship. Is it respect paid to the ministers of religion? I can vouch for it, from the experience I have had, that there is no country where ministers of religion are treated with solid deference as in the United States. Is it that the forms of religion are omitted where we preserve them? Why, if this meeting had been in the United States, I appeal to Dr Bacon whether you would not have begun the proceedings with prayer. In their courts of law, the trials never begin but preceded by prayer. The sheriff calls for a prayer before the judge begins to administer the law. Everything in the New England States betokens a deference of religion—every outward and visible symptom. Take the number of missions supported for the conversion of the heathen, take any text you please, and I say the New England States, with this system of secular education, are a more religious body than the English people, or the people of any Protestant community you can mention. Well, then, I say I want such a system of education as they have in the United States,—a system which, while it will leave the people fully as religious as they are now, shall give them the secular knowledge which the Americans are taught. Dr Bacon comes from a small town of 20,000 inhabitants, who sustain three daily papers; and while there is an activity of intellect, as our objectors here are arguing, it is because the people are intelligent, and take an active, a keen, and a prompt interest in all that happens in the contemporary history of the world, that therefore they must be irreligious. I have pointed to the effects which I have mentioned, to prove that you may have activity of the mind and great intelligence, without impairing the religious feelings of the country. Now, I want us to make this stand: 'We will have as good

a system of education as the New England States.' Why should not Old England be as well educated as New England? And I want it, because I think—not merely on politico-economical grounds, but on every high moral as well as religious ground—I think we ought to cultivate the minds and principles of our people, the same as the United States. We are not a democracy like the United States, but questions of equal importance and complexity are submitted to the public opinion of this country as in the United States. In the ultimate appeal, the public opinion of this country rules this country,—ay, as much as it does in that pure democracy across the Atlantic. Well, when we have questions submitted to us as politicians—questions which, sixty years ago, were evolved from the studies of the most profound thinkers of the age, but which now have become the every-day topics of political warfare—when we live in a state of society calling upon men to exercise their faculties in the judgment of questions of this complexity I say it is necessary for the safety of the State, and of those who, like myself, have made up their minds that they can only progress as the great mass of the people progress, and that their security is only to be found in the intelligence of the people—those who have the same feelings as I have, feel that there can be no safety for us, there can be no progress, but by the education of the people of this country. I want this measure as a better security for the morality of this country. Are we so moral a people that we can dispense with the aid of the schoolmaster? What have been the late exhibitions in this country? Have there been no great crimes, no prominent catastrophes? I want the public schools of this country to purify the moral atmosphere of the State, and to elevate the mental

condition of the populace of this country. I want it, in fact, for the very reasons which an eminent American statesman, Mr Daniel Webster, describes as some of his reasons for supporting the common schools in his own native state—Massachusetts. He says :—‘I regard our free schools as a wise and liberal system of police, by which property and life and the peace of society are secured. We seek to prevent, in some measure, the extension of the penal code by inspiring the sanitary and conservative principles of virtue and knowledge at an early age. We hope to inspire a feeling of respectability and a sense of character by enlarging the capacity and increasing the sphere of intellectual enjoyment. By general instruction we seek to purify the whole moral atmosphere, to keep good sentiments uppermost, and to turn the strong current of feeling and opinion, as well as the censures of the law and the denunciations of religion, against immorality and crime. We hope for a security beyond the pale of the law, in the prevalence of enlightened and well-principled moral sentiment ; we hope to continue to prolong the time when, in the fields and farmhouses of New England, they may, undisturbed, sleep, even with unbarred doors.’ For every one of these reasons I want a system of public instruction in this country equal to that which is to be found in the United States of America. But, besides these complex political questions which were submitted to us—besides the promotion of morality such as is advocated there, I say that, even in questions of religions themselves, you want intelligence in the people to enable them to form a judgment. Why, what is the outcry at the present moment? Some highly educated and respectable old gentlemen, we are told, have been sent over to this country with red stockings and a red hat, and

have been told to take possession of this empire, and map it out in parallelograms ; and we are told we must be frightened from our propriety. I was asking my friend Dr Bacon, before I came here, what they would do in America, and he says they would laugh at it. Now, what I want is this,—that you should have an intelligent public opinion to which you can refer those controversies on religion. Now, I don't wish to speak disrespectfully of the Roman Catholic body. I have a great respect for that large body, which constitutes the majority of Christians ; but, speaking as a Protestant, I say that no man can be competent to take his position as a Protestant unless he is able himself to read the Bible, and judge of the contents of that book for himself. Now, I'll ask our opponents—and I will give you that question to fling at their heads when they talk to you about that, for one-half of the people of this country cannot read with anything like comfort and satisfaction ; it is such a labour to them, that when they have read three or four lines, if they come to a word of four or five syllables, down goes the book in despair ; now, ask your opponents, those who profess to be more religious than the rest of us—ask them if a man can be a Protestant unless he can read the Scriptures. Is not Protestantism founded on the assumption that a man has a private judgment, and that he indulges it ? Well, then, the sincere Protestant, the religious man who opposes us for wishing to teach the children of the universal church to read, are standing in the way, I consider, of the progress of those very religious doctrines which they are bound, by their own conscientious convictions, if possible to defend. And while I will allow to Catholics the first indulgence of their opinions, and while I never join in a vote in the House of Commons to attempt any persecution,

or to prevent them from having the present scope for the exercise of their religion in this country, yet, I say, as a Protestant, I say to Protestants who are opposing us, do you want an enlightened public opinion—a public opinion such as they have in the New England States, to which in these controversies to appeal—then help us at least to give the people the power to read the Scriptures in their mother tongue. Now, sir, this great question having been promulgated in its present form—having been brought before the country as emanating from Manchester, it will be expected that this controversy will be followed up in the spirit which has formerly characterised Manchester in its agitations. You have not many of the difficulties that we had before in another agitation, but you have some greater obstacles than we then had to encounter. It has been proposed, at our meeting yesterday, to change the Lancashire Public School Association into the National Public School Association. Now, I think that was very necessary and very wise, and for this reason : it is of very little use your educating Lancashire unless you educate those parts from which Lancashire is supplied with its population. We are apt to think, and our enemies are disposed to keep up that delusion, by charging us with the fact that the great sources of ignorance and vice and misery are in our large towns. There never was a greater mistake. Take this great city of Manchester. Why, I'll venture to say that not one-half of the population of Manchester were born in Manchester. They are immigrants ; and where have they migrated from ? Why, from those fountains, the overflowings of which furnish these great towns with population—the rural fields and rural agricultural districts of this country. And, therefore, all attempts to stop the

progress of ignorance and its consequences, vice and misery, in your large towns, would be utterly futile so long as you direct your attention merely to the education of the people of Manchester and the other great towns of Lancashire. You must secure a law which, as in the case of the New England States, as in the State of Massachusetts, for instance, compels every locality or parish to furnish a school and the means of education to the whole of the people, and furnish not merely a building such as our orders in council are now aiming at—furnishing bricks and mortar, of which we have more already than are useful—more than are used—but to furnish a master under proper control, and the means of giving instruction to the great body of the people in all parts of the country. To obtain such a law as that, you must agitate, and you must bring public opinion to bear upon Parliament. You will have to make this a hustings question. Now, we are told that the voluntary system will do it. Now, I mentioned the fact yesterday, to illustrate how impossible it was for the voluntary system to effect our object in the agricultural parishes. I mentioned this fact, which is not sufficiently thought of, that in all our agricultural parishes, absenteeism on the part of the great landed proprietary is the rule, and not the exception. Go into any agricultural parish you please, and it is ten to one that you will find the majority of the acres owned by individuals who are living far away from that parish. It is no use, therefore, saying that the proprietors and the rich people in the parishes will educate the people. The property is there, and what I contend for is, that you shall tax that property for the instruction of those whose labour gives value to that property. And then, although the tenant may pay it for the moment—although it

may be paid, probably, by a man poor in himself—a tenant, probably, not himself in prosperous circumstances, yet, in the long run, if you tax property, the proprietor of that property will bear the tax ; and I do not think you will lay a tax that in its result would be more profitable to the community and to individuals than a tax which should give the people education, especially in the agricultural districts. For what is the great obstacle in the agricultural districts to the reduction of pauperism and the diminution of the poor-rates? It is this, that the people are so ignorant that, in the first place, they have none of that spirit of enterprise which should induce them to look out on the wide world for a scene more fitting for their industry and more remunerative for their labour ; but they are so ignorant, that when you are seeking for servants, or seeking for labourers, you would rather not have those people who were brought up in the way in which the great bulk of our agricultural labourers are. I have had an opportunity lately of testing and proving that the great difficulty here in dealing with agricultural labourers, in being able to do nothing for them, is because they are not sufficiently able to raise themselves out of the immediate sphere of their daily occupation. I would say, therefore, as a matter of self-interest, if you wish to give the people an ambition to go beyond the bounds of their little parish, where they are often rotting upon allowances of two or three loaves a week,—if you want to make men despise that existence in which they are bound like serfs to the parish,—teach them reading, teach them writing, teach them arithmetic and a little geography ; let them know what is going on in the Colonies ; let them feel the ambition which men in the middle class feel of removing from the scene

of their birth, with the prospect of ultimately returning enriched or benefited to the land of their birth. I do not go on the principle of self-interest. I say it is our *duty*, if we wish to see a community worthy of the name of English, to educate them better than they are now educated. What a fund, what a mine of riches lies neglected in the population of this country! Think what a race it is. Think of the race that produced a Shakspeare, a Robert Burns, and a Milton. And then, think how many hundreds of thousands of this race have pined in stolid ignorance, like the very oxen they drive, because they had not the mere elements, the tools of science placed in their hands,—because they were not even taught to read and write, and therefore perished from off this scene without having the opportunity, as they would have had, if we had given them a moderate instruction, of probably adding to the glory of their country and to the fame of the people by whom they are surrounded. Think how you leave the people—and you quarrel with their vices—you say they are drunken. Would not *you* be drunken?—I speak to the people of a more elevated class, and those in easy circumstances—would not *you* be drunken now, as your forefathers were not one century ago, if you had not some stimulus applied to your intellectual powers, some other resources besides the dram to produce that excitement which, mental or physical, is necessary to the health and existence of man. Why, take the people of a superior rank, to which I refer; go back only forty years, to that time when there were not to be found on their drawing-room tables, as there are now, this multitude of cheap literature, in the most attractive forms, to invite them to constant study—when the books were scarcely turned over by the class I refer

to—what were their habits? Drunkenness. How were their evenings spent? Why, for want of even intelligence and activity of mind enough to hold a conversation, spent behind pieces of painted paste-board, playing at cards! There was not one evening party where cards were not brought out, and simply because forty or fifty good people of that class had not intelligence enough to furnish each other one evening's amusement, and must have such resources. Well, now, you find for the people—I am speaking now of those in easy circumstances—you find the evenings and the days too short for them, such are their intellectual resources and the occupation of their minds; their evenings are spent, not in such frivolities as those, not in drunkenness or in card-playing, but in intelligent communion; and the evenings and the days are too short for the enjoyment of these intellectual gratifications. And would not the working classes, if they were taught to read and write, and not merely that, but something of their own nature, and of the laws of the nature which surrounds them, find their resources for solace and gratification in this rather than in the gin shop, the dog-fight, or the pitch and toss in the public house? Yes; already they show symptoms of an improved taste. See how they flock to your musical entertainments—how they resort to cheap trains to make themselves better acquainted with nature. Have they not shown, even without the advantages of education they might and ought to possess, what a noble aspiration there is among the mass of the people to throw off the old skin, and to find comfort in better and more Christian-like enjoyments? Well, on all these grounds, whether on the fair and ample plea of improving the national tastes and amusements—whether it is to give to men the

power of judging what they will be called on to judge, the political destinies of this country—whether it is that they may judge the highest of all questions, that of religious faith,—whatever be your motives, give the people instruction, elevate their minds, improve their faculties, stimulate their reason, and in every phase in which you view mankind, they will come out better and purer for the process to which you subject them.

XXXIV.

FROM MR GEORGE COMBE TO MR COBDEN.

EDINBURGH, 4 Nov. 1850.

MY DEAR SIR,—Allow me in the joy of my soul to congratulate you on your taking the position which so truly becomes you, and which you are so admirably calculated to fill with great benefit to your country, at the head of the National Public School Association. I have read the speeches with great interest, and yours reminds one of the anti-corn law days, when your logic was like a two-edged sword dividing the marrow bones of protection, leaving them withered and powerless to be scattered to the winds. This, in my judgment, is the most important movement that has taken place this century. It is the supplement to parliamentary reform and Free Trade, and to all other social improvements, and one without which their fairest fruits

were constantly in danger of being blighted. What did you think of the state of Germany? Did you receive a letter from me dated Homburg, 5th July? And how is your son doing? I have just heard of an avowed Phrenological Seminary being about to be opened at Chertsey, Surrey, by Mr Emil Arnold Præger, whose views are printed in a 6d. pamphlet published by Baillière. They are sound and worth your reading; but I do not know the author personally.

Mrs Combe joins me in kind regards to you and Mrs Cobden; and I remain, my dear sir, yours very sincerely,
GEO. COMBE.

XXXV.

Mrs COBDEN to Mrs SCHWABE.

WESTBOURNE TERRACE,
December 27th, 1850.

Do you take much interest in the Exposition of Arts and Manufactures which is to take place in 1851 in London? We are likely to be pretty much in the thick of it, for Mr Cobden is appointed one of Commissioners of twenty, and the Duke of Richmond is one of his colleagues!!! I am told that several lists of names were submitted to the Prince, and that Mr Cobden's name appeared in them all.

X X X V I.


Mr COBDEN to Mrs SCHWABE.

MIDHURST, 6 Aug. 1851.

MY DEAR MRS SCHWABE,—My boy and I are spending ten hours a day in the open air flying kites, rolling on the grass, or rambling in the woods. He was up at five o'clock this morning to go round the woods with my man, who has the care of the growing timber, and before I was out of bed he walked into my room with two rabbits and a hare hanging across his shoulder. He is in the seventh heaven with his fishing and shooting. I wish he was half as fond of his books—but that may come.

Thank you for your kindness in sending me a copy of the *Economist* containing a critique upon Gladstone's able and humane exposure of the Neapolitan iniquities. I know some of the best of the sufferers, and have had letters from them since they have been in prison; from one in particular, Scialoja (the Bastiat of Italy), who was Professor of Political Economy at Turin when I was there, and is the author of some excellent elementary works on that science. He is a native of Naples, and, when I saw him, was a refugee in Piedmont. But, notwithstanding his previous knowledge of the character of his own King, he was unwise enough to accept his offer of the post of Minister of Commerce under the Constitution which he had sworn to uphold, and the consequence is that he has been eighteen months in prison without trial, and ignorant


of the crime with which he is charged. I am bound, however, to add that he is not subjected to the brutal treatment which Gladstone states (and, I have no doubt, truly) is inflicted upon other equally distinguished and innocent men. Well, the article in the *Economist* seems to hesitate very much about recommending this country to interfere in behalf of these Neapolitan patriots, and yet its arguments all go to justify the principle of interfering, if we think proper, *in behalf of liberty*, forgetting, apparently, that if we claim the right to interfere in support of one set of opinions, the Russians and Austrians have, upon the same principle, an equal right to interfere on the other side. But then the writer at last comes to the conclusion that if we pursue the policy of non-intervention we ought to insist upon other countries doing the same, and he falls foul of some crotchety Liberals (myself included, I suppose) for not arming Lord Palmerston with sufficient power to enforce this policy upon Russia and Austria. Here is the cloven foot! It is a Palmerston-inspired scribe. Their name is legion! Now, if I have one complaint of a heavier character than another against our Foreign Minister (and I have again and again repeated it in public), it is that he never recorded one word in the shape of a protest against the Russian invasion of Hungary or the French outrage at Rome. I am convinced that if we acted rigidly upon the principle of non-intervention ourselves (which we have never yet done), we should have moral weight enough, without going to war, to prevent other countries violating that principle. Not only did our Government not protest, but it is quite evident, from the correspondence since published in the Blue Books, that all the secret sympathies of our diplomacy were against the Hungarians



and the Romans. In the case of the former, no sooner had Hungary succumbed than Lord Palmerston wrote to congratulate the Austrian Government upon the close of the war, and the Russian Ambassador very maliciously complimented his Lordship upon this act of complaisance. Pulsky and Kossuth have read the official correspondence, and they are both indignant at its tone, and quite convinced that our diplomatists were hostile to their cause. In fact, nobody but extremely shallow people would ever believe that our aristocratic executive Government can be sincerely favourable to democratic revolution on the Continent. Lord Palmerston is not a whit more liberal than his colleagues, but he is clever enough to persuade people (and there are some of them in Manchester) that he is dying to serve the cause of liberty all over the world; 'but there is that naughty Cobden always backbiting and thwarting him'! And this brings me to a remark in your letter—that you hear me charged with advocating a selfish, unsympathising policy towards the Hungarians and others. I can easily understand, after reading the speeches of Dr Vaughan and others at the late Hungarian meeting, that these belligerent divines consider me a very lukewarm 'sympathiser.'

You know my feelings towards the Hungarians; that my house has been open to them in their misfortunes; that for eighteen months I have been one of only five members of a relief committee who have remained together to raise the funds necessary to keep these helpless refugees from starving (all the loud talkers who were for going through fire and blood for the Hungarian cause disappeared when the real work of charity began). You know, to your cost, that I turned mendicant on their behalf, and I believe I may say that a larger share of the contri-

butions to the Relief Fund passed through my hands (Joseph Sturge was my largest contributor) than those of any other member of the committee. And yet I am blamed because I do not go much further, and advocate our Government's interference on behalf of the Hungarians. Now, my first answer to this is to repeat what I have just said—that I don't believe our aristocratic Government ought to be trusted in such an intervention. I believe, when it became a serious democratic movement in any country, our aristocracy would be against it, just as they are against any such movement at home. But my next objection, and principal one, to the policy of Government intervention is, that to be efficient it must imply an *armed* intervention. Indeed, Dr Vaughan, in his speech at Manchester, avowed it. Now, I have a high respect for the Doctor's abilities. His principles, however, or rather his apparent want of political and polemical principle, would qualify him to be a bishop—nay, an *arch*-bishop. He talks, for instance, of sending a fleet to fight the Hungarians' battles at Cronstadt. Dissenting ministers are never found on board ships of war. How easy it is to fight other people's battles—by proxy! How it reminds me of what took place at the first meeting in London to form a society for the relief of the destitute Hungarian refugees. Whilst the time of the meeting was being consumed by the declamation of an orator who exhausted every figure of speech to give vent to his feelings of commiseration for the exiled patriots, a person from the City, a plain man of business, who sat next to me, whispered in my ear,—‘What a pity so much time should be lost in urging sentiments upon which we are all agreed.’ ‘Have a little patience,’ was my reply; ‘you will never be troubled with him again.’ And so it proved, and



so it will turn out in the Doctor's case ; if we send a fleet to fight the Russians at Cronstadt, according to his advice, he will be never heard of there. Now, I confess I have no respect for people who indulge in this vicarious courage. If I advocate a war, it shall be such a one as I am prepared to take a part in myself ; no other shall have my sanction. To hear a minister of the religion of Christ talk glibly of sending forth thousands of his fellow-men to deadly combat in a quarrel with which they have not the remotest concern, and then to see him sit down quietly in his own family, without giving a moment's thought to the orphans and widows to be created, and the old men made childless by his martial policy, to say nothing of the souls and bodies of those engaged in the battle—bah ! it need not surprise us that there are so many unbelievers in the land.

But now one word about the Neapolitans. Everybody, after reading Gladstone's letter, must feel, as you do, anxious to do something to rescue the victims from their present fate. What can be done ? In my opinion, Mr Gladstone has rendered more service to humanity, by holding up to infamy the Government of Naples, than could have been effected by our Foreign Minister if he had been ever so well disposed. Depend on it, his pamphlet will tell upon the trembling tyrants. But unless you wish to make fresh victims, hold out no prospect of assistance to the Liberals of Naples for the future. To talk of establishing a constitutional Government in the present state of its population is as wild a scheme as if we were to propose a representative system for Timbuctoo. There are a few thousand men in the two Sicilies, educated and accomplished men, who are yearning for freedom. They are

surrounded by as many millions who have no cravings to satisfy beyond their animal wants, and a religious instinct which is moulded by the priests into an instrument for their mental degradation. When I was in Italy in 1846, long before the continental troubles, I made the acquaintance of many Liberal politicians at Naples, and after listening to their dreams of constitutional and representative Governments, I endeavoured to convince them of the utter impossibility of working such a form of Government with so ignorant and priest-ridden a population. I advised them to wait at least for another generation. And I well recollect writing from Terracina, on my way back to Rome, to a very earnest but exalted young engineer officer, named Dayila, entreating him for the sake of his young wife and two infant children to abandon his *radical* projects. It is cruel to incite this intellectual fractional minority to fresh schemes by holding out delusive hopes of aid from this country. *We* cannot force the mass of the Neapolitan people to prefer our notions to their own. They have a right to revel in rags, and hug their fetters, and worship their priests' garments if they like. I would not certainly live with such a people if I could help it. But if I were compelled to become a Neapolitan citizen, I should assuredly abandon my vocation of an agitator. And, to confess my honest conviction, if I were put in absolute possession of the government of Naples to-morrow, I should be puzzled how to govern the people for the next seventy years by any other influences than those by which the great majority are now contentedly governed. For it is a great mistake to suppose that the majority are discontented with the present Government. The small minority are dissatisfied, the rest neither know

nor care anything about the Government. But, enough, this letter has run to an unreasonable length. But you have brought it on yourself, by touching the only chord which would have vibrated for an instant in my present unstrung mood.

By the way, whilst upon the subject of letter-writing upon foreign politics, why does not our friend L—— either himself write a simple narrative of the facts connected with the proceedings in Hesse, or engage somebody else to do it? Is it possible that the account I read of the trial of the judges before a court-martial can be true? Here it is.

‘ Un fait inouï vient d’arriver à Cassel : il dénote jusqu’ où peut aller la réaction en Allemagne. Sept magistrats ont été condamnés par le conseil de guerre à huit mois d’emprisonnement dans une forteresse, pour avoir en Octobre dernier, condamné un Sieur Faber, à trois mois d’emprisonnement pour violation de la constitution de 1848 en vigueur à cette époque. Les magistrats se sont présentés revêtus de leurs robes devant le conseil de guerre, et ont déclaré qu’ils trouvaient au dessous de leur dignité de se défendre contre une pareille accusation. Leur condamnation a causé une pénible impression, en ce qu’elle prouve qu’il n’y a plus ni foi ni loi qui règne en Allemagne et que désormais la force brutale gouverne seule.’

What is wanted in England is a very plain and simple narrative of the facts in Hesse; from the beginning told in just such language as a German would use in describing the events to a child. For the English are as ignorant as children upon these matters. The facts should be brought out without passion or exaggeration—but with a scrupulous eye to truth. If such a narrative be published, I will

quote from it in a speech. Give my kind regards to Mrs Schwabe and your circle, and, believe me, faithfully yours,
R. COBDEN.

P.S.—By a curious accident, rummaging amongst old letters, I was going to destroy this from Mr Milner Gibson, when I thought it afforded an opportunity of showing my notions of foreign *intervention in a moral way*. Observe that Mr Milner Gibson asks me to leave my card at the Turkish Ambassador's. It is the etiquette that cards must be first left with ambassadors before they can call upon private individuals. In my answer to Mr Gibson, which I begged him to convey to the Ambassador, I stated my regret to see that the Turkish Government had consented to act as the gaoler of Austria by keeping Kossuth and his companion in confinement, in violation of the law of nations and the rules of hospitality. That, under these circumstances, I should decline paying my respects to the representative of Turkey; but should be the first to do so when Kossuth and the other illustrious guests were set at liberty by the Government of Constantinople. And I kept my promise, and never entered his house. If everybody had so acted, how long would the Government of Turkey, or any other power, brave the universal contempt and neglect of society?

Extract from Mr Milner Gibson's Letter to Mr Cobden.

'I have also a request to make you, not from myself *this* time, but from the Turkish Ambassador,

who would be so glad that you and Mrs Cobden would leave your cards at the Embassy, as he is anxious for the pleasure of a more intimate acquaintance with you, and receives now every Monday evening. Having received this commission, I could not refuse to execute it.'

XXXVII.

MRS COBDEN TO MRS SCHWABE.

DUNFORD, *October 9th*, 1851.

Mr Cobden left for Town this morning, too late, he very much feared, to have the great pleasure of seeing Frederika Bremer. I trust, however, that he will meet that truly great man, Kossuth, in London. He is daily expected at Southampton, where, I am glad to hear, there are very active preparations being made to receive him with great honours by the Mayor and Corporation. How is it that you will not be at Manchester to receive the Queen? Surely there is a steady and a quiet revolution daily working amongst us, and this is another sign of it, England's Queen visiting her merchants and manufacturers. She is wise, for these, and not the warriors, will in future be the props of her throne. But one could have wished that our cotton lords had displayed a little more nobility of mind, and not to have gone and squabbled over gowns, etc.

XXXVIII.

Mr COBDEN to Mrs SCHWABE.

GREAT EXHIBITION OF THE WORKS OF INDUSTRY OF
ALL NATIONS 1851.

OFFICE FOR THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE,
10th October 1851.

MY DEAR MRS SCHWABE, — Where is Mr Schwabe? I hope he will call on me in Westbourne Terrace, or I will look out for him at the Exhibition. The crowd to-day is not so great as on the shilling days. It is curious to see how eighteenpence will prove an obstacle to people, even when they are stimulated by the greatest desire to see a place, which must be closed for ever in a few hours. As I walk about in the crowd, I fancy I perceive that the people's faces wear a very similar aspect, as if they were reflecting that they are soon to lose a spectacle which, during their lifetime, they will never see again. At present it is not expected that the ceremony of formally closing the Exhibition on the 15th will be very grand. The Prince will make a farewell speech. But it is not expected the Queen will be present, and yet there are rumours that she will make her appearance as *an Exhibitor!* *Mrs Albert* or *Mrs Rex*, I suppose we must call her.

Kind regards to Miss Brendon and all your circle, and, I am, very truly yours,

R. COBDEN.

XXXIX.

Mrs COBDEN to Mrs SCHWABE.

DUNFORD, *October 30th, 1831.*

Whilst striding along the heaths, exhilarated by the free air, our talk has for the last few days been chiefly about Kossuth and his splendid speeches, short sentences of which cling with so much pathos to his memory.

On Friday last Mr Cobden had got himself all in readiness to start for Chichester, in order to proceed from thence to Southampton by the first train, in hopes of gaining some tidings of the illustrious exile, when a note from Gilpin reached by post to announce Kossuth's arrival on our shore. On a personal acquaintance, Kossuth answered all Mr Cobden's expectations. The striking characteristics of the man are earnestness and sincerity, and my husband adds there is an elevated moral tone about everything he does and says, which cannot fail to impress you with his goodness, and he must stand confessed a genius by all who hear him, his eloquent delivery in the English language perfectly astonished Mr Cobden. Madame Kossuth looks very careworn, and, if possible, more fragile than Madame Pulsky, very lady like in appearance, but rather silent. The children, very properly, were sent off immediately to London, to be out of the way of the bustle, so Mr Cobden did not see them.


XL.

SPEECH by Mr COBDEN at the MEETING of the
NATIONAL PUBLIC SCHOOLS ASSOCIATION at
Manchester. *1st December 1851.*

We are hardly arrived at that point in this great struggle in which we can venture to say that we will define what the particular kind of secular education shall be which shall be enjoyed in the schools which are to be erected, or to be maintained out of the public rates. But when that time shall come, I am quite sure that a great deal of that knowledge appertaining to our own nature, and to our own design and object in this world, as described by our friend Mr Combe, will undoubtedly form a part of the secular education of this country—as a part, and only a part of that education, combined, as it will be, with the religious instruction. But, gentlemen, we have yet to settle this question,—shall we have any education at all in this country, such as is enjoyed in almost every other civilised country—I mean an education supported by all, and free to all? Now, that is the question. I hold anything else but that to be short of the real end and object of this controversy. Shall there be a system of education supported by all, and common to all? Well, you are going to settle that question, as you have settled so many other important topics in Manchester, for I don't conceal from myself that upon the local contest in which you are now engaged will depend the kind of education which is likely to be adopted in this country. The application which

is about to be made to Parliament for a Private Bill embodying a scheme for giving to Manchester and Salford a local system of education, a system confined to those two boroughs, will, if it be adopted, I have no doubt in the world, be made a model for the adoption of all other localities similarly circumstanced—I mean manufacturing districts and our great commercial centres, and that whatever may be adopted as the Act of Parliament for Manchester, will, as in the Municipal Corporations Act, become a general Act under which other places may put themselves, just as they now apply for the benefit of a charter under the Municipal Corporations Act. I have no doubt of that; and therefore you are engaged in a struggle of vast importance, not only to yourselves, but to the whole community. Scotland, as Mr Combe says, has its eyes upon you. The rest of the country is equally interested in what you are now doing. I do not want the National Public School Association to think that at present their important duties lie elsewhere. Their duties lie here at home; and my opinion is, that if their exertions are not centered here, in Manchester and Salford, we shall fail to do our duty in this crisis of this controversy. Now, what is the question at issue between the National Public School Association which would apply their scheme to Manchester and Salford, and the Manchester and Salford Association, who applies merely for a local Bill? Why, I think the whole difference between you may be traced to that long-standing and almost sole difficulty in the way of a national system of education in this country—I mean the religious difficulty. The real question which you are now disputing is this,—shall the education be one in which the secular shall be separate from the religious element, or

shall it be one where the teacher in your schools shall be paid out of a public rate to teach all kinds of religion, at the expense of all sorts of people. That is the sole difference, I mean that is the source of all your differences ; because, if you removed the religious difficulty, I do not think that people in Manchester would be at all disputing as to whether there should be more or less of self-government in your scheme. I believe that the members of the Manchester and Salford scheme Association would be just as much inclined to preserve the municipal self-government of Manchester as you would be ; but they remove a part of the administration and control and discretion in their school business to London, simply and solely because they think by that they are going to escape the religious difficulty which lies in their way. And it is not a question of whether the schoolrooms that are now in existence shall be used for giving both secular and religious instruction, because by the plan which has been adopted by this Society this morning at a conference which met this morning, it is now the rule of this Society, it is a plan which we propose to adopt as a part of our Bill for Parliament, that all schools belonging to separate churches or chapels which may be disposed to give education, subject to inspection, insuring that the secular instruction shall be good in quality, may receive payment per head for all the scholars educated in those schools, just in the same way as it is proposed in the Manchester and Salford plan. Only there is a stipulation, there is a safeguard, that there shall be no payment made to those teachers for religious instruction ; that the religious instruction shall be given apart, and at separate times ; and that it be distinctly understood, that out of the public rates there shall be no payment made



for instruction in religion. Well, then, let it no longer be said that, by the plan which we propose, we are going to sacrifice the existing schools. We propose to take authority for buying existing schools, or for renting existing schools; and we now propose, in addition, by the resolution of this morning, to do precisely what the Manchester and Salford Society proposes to do,—that is, to pay for the instruction of children in secular knowledge, in all schools belonging to the churches or chapels where they may be disposed to give us the guarantee by inspection that they are giving a proper secular education. Well, then, the question between this Association and the rival Association is simply reduced to this :—they insist that in all schools religious education shall be given at the expense of the whole community. Well, now, that involves one or two difficulties and objections, which I think are insuperable. In the first place, why, what a reflection it is upon the office of religious teacher;—they say, ‘We will make schoolmasters the teachers of religion.’ Do they propose that schoolmasters shall graduate in a course of divinity in order to be qualified for that instruction? Why, how they discount and degrade their own profession, in making a schoolmaster, who is never taught divinity at all, on equality with clergymen, and calling upon him to give religious instruction! But it involves a greater difficulty than that; and here is my objection to the principle which requires absolutely and without exception the religious instruction to be given in the school. It involves this grand and insuperable difficulty and injustice, that by that means you exclude from those schools many of those whose parents have been rated to the maintenance of those schools.

Now, in the first place, I find in the local Bill, as drawn up here, I find that, in all schools to be built out of the borough-rate levied upon all the property of this borough, the reading of the Holy Scriptures in the authorised version shall be a part of the daily instruction of the scholars. Well, now, everybody will remember that I took my stand against the exclusion of the Bible from any schools, when we were settling our points of faith as a secular association. I said, 'I never will be a party to any scheme that attempts to lay down in an Act of Parliament this monstrous, arrogant, and dictatorial doctrine, that a parish or community shall not, if it please, introduce the Bible into its schools.' I made my stand against that, and said I never would put my hand to any such doctrine; but at the same time, I am just as prepared to take my stand against any system which levies taxes upon Jews and Roman Catholics, which sends the tax-gatherer round to their houses, and calls upon them to contribute to the school-rate, and then insert a clause like that which says they and their children shall derive no advantage from those schools. Now, I ask those gentlemen, have they any scheme by which they propose to exempt these parties from paying the taxes, whom they exclude by this clause in their Bill? Well, then, I ask them if they are prepared to carry us back, not only into a worse state of intolerance and bigotry than any that exists on the continent of Europe at the present time in any Protestant country, but actually to the times when, in towns like Frankfort in olden times, Jews were shut up and set apart in the town, and made to live in certain streets, and be locked up at home at night long before Christians were required to be in their

domiciles!—Why, it is a worse treatment to the Jews than they received in those countries when they were thus persecuted. You educate Christians out of Jewish money, and you deny them the right of having education themselves for their children. What would be said—now just put a parallel case—if, after levying a rate for lighting the town and supplying it with water, you compelled the Jews to live in some street by themselves where there was neither a gas lamp nor yet a water pipe carried? And I won't say merely the Jews, but the Roman Catholics; because you absolutely prohibit the Roman Catholic from entering those schools, if you mean what you say in the clause of this Bill. You say 'the authorised version of the Bible;' nine hundred and ninety-nine thousandth part of which is verbatim the same as the Roman Catholic version; but it contains two or three passages, in which I yet never could perceive any very material difference of meaning, and by retaining those passages, by making that the test, and thereby striking at a point of conscience in those who object to that version of the Bible, you prohibit them as much as though you put a policeman at the door, and said, 'No Roman Catholic shall enter here.' Well, I say it is impossible that such a thing as that can continue permanently to be a recognised state of things in a country that calls itself in the slightest degree under the government of just principles. And now, where is the difficulty of our opponents agreeing to our own terms? Where's the difficulty of the friends of the other Society joining in the principle which is now enunciated by this Society? They insist upon making the schools doctrinal and denominational, but at the same time they have so far receded from

the stand which the Church formerly made, that they will allow a scholar to enter other schools and be exempted from the doctrinal teaching of those schools, provided he carries a written request from his parents to be so exempt. Well, so far they go a great way to recognise our principle, that secular education may be given apart from religious instruction, inasmuch as those children who are allowed to carry in their pockets a pass by which they are exempt from this religious teaching, at all events are placed very nearly in the position in which we would place all our schools; and therefore, in point of fact, they recognise the principle which we advocate, with this exception, that they require absolutely that the Bible—the authorised version of the Bible—shall be read daily in all their schools. Well, now, I do hope that the authors of the Manchester and Salford School Society will address themselves to-morrow to that question, and see whether they cannot move one step further, and abstain from the attempt to inflict injustice and wrong upon a large section, and that the most necessitous part of the community, by attempting to make them read that which, if they did read, they could only do it with hypocrisy; and, therefore, by practising that hypocrisy for the sake of getting education, certainly could not, in the eyes of any rational being in the world, become more just or more moral by the process. Well, gentlemen, there's the position in which we stand, or, rather, you stand, in Manchester. I have stated the amount of difference between your two schemes, which will next Session come before Parliament. Were I now living in Manchester, I should address myself solely to the question, for the present at least, as it effects these localities; because, I repeat

to you, whatever is done in Parliament the next Session will, in my opinion, act very much as a model for a great part of the kingdom; and, therefore, it is your business. We shall have only that strength in Parliament to deal with these two topics which you give us by your support out of doors. It is for you to decide which of these plans shall be adopted; but sorry I am to see that a great portion of those who I thought were above all others vitally concerned in this question—I mean the dissenting bodies—have stood aloof from this controversy under the most vain and delusive ideas that ever possessed human beings,—that this was not a question solely as to one or another scheme, but they are under the impression that there is a possibility in this country of going back to no scheme at all. How men moving in society can be at all under the delusion that there is a doubt about such a subject, I can't imagine. If there's one point upon which this great community, I think, has more made up its mind than another, it is in adopting some system of combined action for public education, under the sanction of Government, through local rates and local management, as far as possible. There's no doubt but that is determined on by the great mass of the community; and however anybody in sincerity, who are so involved in this question as the dissenting body are, can be moving about the country and trying to advocate or plead for that impossible cause—no public education at all—passes my comprehension. I believe them to be sincere, I can't doubt they are sincere; but if they were really aiming at playing the game of that party which they have always considered inimical to their religious interests and their religious freedom, they

could not have taken a more effectual course than they have been during the last twelvemonth, by ignoring the existence, almost, of this National School Society, and detaching themselves from that side of the question in which I should have thought, at all events, looking upon their principles as they avow them themselves, they were more interested than any part of the community. Now, I speak with some degree of feeling on this subject, because I have taken to this Secular School Association simply and purely, as I have avowed again and again, because I thought there was a great act of injustice perpetrated upon Dissenters. I thought they were going to be wronged by another system which they regarded as a system of endowments. I have again and again said that as one who every Sunday take my children to a parish church, and therefore am living, as it were, upon endowments, I could not plead for myself that I had those conscientious scruples which I was told and believed the Dissenters had. I took up this secular system because I thought, while it did no injustice to the Church, it did injustice to Dissenters. I find the great body of Dissenters not only holding aloof, but some of them,—Dr Halley, for instance, and his friends, and the great organ of their party, the *Banner*, stating that, if driven to take one or the other, they will take the Church system. Do they understand their own principles? Have I done right in believing what they have told me of their principles,—that they shun the system of endowments? I was advocating the American system of education, because I knew there, in America, it was applied to the satisfaction of those descendants of the Nonconformists who have not forgotten their principles—and where we know the system works without

injury to the rights of conscience of any individual in the country. I speak thus emphatically upon this subject, because I don't hesitate to say I am for an education for the people. I believe the great mass of the people take less interest in this sectarian squabbling than many others of us are apt to imagine. The great mass of the people want education for their children; they are sick to death of these obstacles you throw in their way. I believe that when our extended franchise throws more power into the hands of the multitude—you will see that what I say is true, that there's a feeling for national education which will sweep away some of these cobwebs with which you attempt to blind the great mass of the people; and feeling this, and having done my best to do justice to all parties in the matter, I say now emphatically, I vote for education; I'll support education; I'll do the best I can for Dissenters; but I'll never oppose a system of education, which promises to give to the mass of the people an opportunity of raising themselves in life, and benefiting their children, by having a share in its advantages, which, as Mr Combe says, those alone above them have hitherto enjoyed. I don't, therefore, profess to come here to oppose the local plan. I believe if that plan be adopted it won't remain where it is. I believe if we once get a system of free schools, the spirit of a free-school system will very soon possess itself of the minds of the people, that it will be found here, as it has been found in Ireland, under a far severer pressure and test than it ever can have in this country; it is superior in its strength to almost all other influences; and I believe, if we once establish a system of free schools supported by rates in this country, it won't be long that you who pay rates here in Manchester will

allow either Roman Catholics or Jews to be excluded from the benefits of those rates. I won't go into the question of how far the people of this country want education. Go and inquire amongst the people themselves. Go and ask the agricultural labourer at his plough; test the amount of thought and capacity that that man has had by instruction imparted to him; ask him where the guano he's dealing with as a manure day after day comes from; he has no idea. He never heard such a subject suggested. Ask him whose land it is he's working upon. He can tell you the farmer's name, because the farmer pays his wages; but ask him who his landlord is;—ten to one he has never thought of it, because in England, from want of education, and training the mind to thought and reflection, they don't learn to note causes of any kind. Ask them the geography of the next parish. As for the geography of the world, they can't tell you whether America is in France or in Spain. It is unquestionably true, and cannot be denied by anyone that has travelled, that we are the worst educated people of any Protestant country in any part of the earth. Mr Combe has borne witness to this; Mr Baynes has borne witness: and I challenge denial on personal investigation. Is that a safe state of things to be left in? They tell us that voluntaryism has worked well. I say we are the only people that have had voluntaryism, and we are behind all the world. What do they say in America? Here what Mr Daniel Webster said in a speech delivered at an open-air meeting the other day in Washington:—'The population of the United States is 23,000,000. Now, take the map of the continent of Europe, and spread it out before you. Take your scale and your dividers, and lay

off any one area in any shape you please, a triangle, a circle, parallelogram, or a trapezoid, and of an extent that shall contain 150,000,000 of people, and there will be found within the United States more persons who do habitually read and write that can be embraced within the lines of your demarcation.' But in the United States they don't trust to voluntarism. They make use of their parochial and their municipal organisation to secure a system of schools free to all, paid for by all, and not a system of schools merely for that class of destitute people to whom Mr Baynes has alluded. The New England schools have so grown and improved, that they have taken in by degrees from one class to another, from one grade to another, till now, in many parts of New England, you find no private schools at all. All classes are educated at the common public schools. It is my firm belief that, in this country, a system of schools once established, paid for by all, would very soon here—as in fact we have seen in the case of the King's Swinburne school, conducted so admirably by the Rev. Mr Dawes—be found to go on so, that, by degrees, the small farmer's son would be sitting by the labourer's son; and as you improved still more in your system of education, the small farmer's son would be coming and taking his seat by the side of the rich farmer's son. I have no doubt in the world that would be the case, because by combination—by co-operation—you would have a better system of schools than you could have anywhere else; and therefore I don't look to a system of free schools as one of charity for the great mass of the people,—I mean for the poorest people. One of the benefits we should derive from common schools would be, that it would cause that greater intermixture and blending of

society that would lead the middle and working classes to send their children to one common school, where they would become more familiarised in their common views and tastes and habits, and the boys would be brought up in genial sympathies and more intercourse than that which prevails at present in this country. I do not argue with those gentlemen who tell us that the voluntary system has answered; I don't argue with them. I say, 'Go into the high-ways and byways and inquire for yourselves if it answers.' I don't think it is safe for us as a nation to be the most ignorant Protestant people on the face of the earth. This is a period in the world's history when the very security, the trade, and the progress of a nation, depend, not so much on the contest of arms as on the rivalry in science and the arts which must spring from education. Even lately we have been inviting all the world to a great competition. Did any reflecting man walk through the Great Exhibition without feeling that we were apt to be a little under a delusion as to the quality of men in other parts, and their capacity to create those articles of utility of which we are apt to think sometimes we possess a monopoly of the production in this country? Did nobody feel somewhat struck at the vast superiority of the French in articles of taste and delicate manipulation; and were we not equally struck to find ourselves so closely trod on the heels in everything that related to the more rude utility of life, in American productions, where we found ourselves beaten in shipbuilding, in locks, pistols, and many other things we had to show? Did it not make Englishmen feel that they had to look about them? And how will you be able to rally, how will you attain to any improvement in arts and manufactures in any way but by improving

the education of your people ; and I don't think we can wait. And there is a reason why I am tired to death of this sectarian quarrel, which is preventing the people from being educated : year after year is passing away, and the period we are losing is not to be recalled. Why, it has been stated in public, it has been stated in our public records, that the poor people don't send their children to school, upon an average, more than two or three years, and in some cases not more than ten months. Well, we have passed over two or three years in this sectarian strife, in which we prevent the people from having education as they have in America by a system of common schools, and whilst we are doing so a generation, a section of the community, passes into mature life without any education at all. One great wave of humanity passes on, and we never get a reflux of the tide, to have a chance of giving these people an education. We cannot wait ! I hope the people of Manchester will rouse themselves to a consideration of the danger and difficulty of this matter. I hope you who have gained so many victories in other things, will find yourselves called upon to exert yourselves not only for your own benefit, but for the benefit of the people at large. I augur well from the large meeting I see here to-night ; I augur from it that you take an interest in this question. I am told that a still larger meeting is to take place to-morrow on this subject ; all this augurs well of the interest you take in this question. If Manchester men will direct their minds to this question perseveringly and energetically, and if you consider that in this case, as in a former struggle, you are fighting the battle, not only for England, but in some degree for the whole civilised world, I have no doubt you will present such a case to the

House of Commons next Session, that we shall be relieved from any doubt or difficulty as to the course we shall have to pursue. Send up your petitions for what you conceive to be the right measure for Manchester and Salford; give us your support, and your members, I have no doubt, will do their duty in this matter, and most happy I shall be to be found alongside of them in that which is found to be necessary.

X L I.

M. HORACE SAY TO MR COBDEN.

11 RUE BOURSULT,
A PARIS, le 28 Decbr. 1851.

MON CHER M. COBDEN,—Je connais trop bien vos sentiments généreux et libéraux pour n'être pas convaincu que vous plaignez sincèrement la France de la triste position où elle est tombée. Non seulement nous n'avons pas la liberté commerciale; mais nous n'avons plus aucune liberté. Nous sommes sous un régime de terreur comme à Naples; plus de liberté de la presse, plus de liberté individuelle, plus de liberté de parole.

'Nous conservons le droit de penser en secret,
Mais la sottise régné et la raison se tait.'

Malgré tout, notre nation fatiguée de soixant ans de révolutions accepte en ce moment cette phase de repos qu'elle peut goûter pendant quelques temps à l'abri des bayonnettes, en restant débarrassée d'une bataille générale, dont les chefs du parti demago-

gique, avaient réuni à lui faire peur pour le mois de Mai 1852.

Dans une election d'un très nouveau genre qui vient d'avoir lieu par *oui* et par *non*, le pays a donné une véritable sanction au pouvoir illimité du Président pour faire une nouvelle Constitution. Le prince est enivré du succès qu'il vient d'obtenir ; il est entouré d'hommes très peu honorables ; il est infatué de la manie de parodier tout ce qu' a fait le grand Napoleon, et c'est de ce coté que viendront les plus grands dangers. Une fois que le peuple sera remis de ce premier mouvement d'adhésion, que l'activité plus ou moins factice des affaires commerciales et industrielles s'arrêtera, que les embarras de la trésorerie se manifesteront, la position deviendra plus difficile.

Il sera bien difficile de gouverner despotiquement sans être entraîné de plus en plus vers la tyrannie. C'est bien ce que comprennent les gouvernements absolus de l'Europe.

Mon beau frère, que vous connaissez, est à Naples, et il m'écrit que le roi de Naples ne se sent pas de joie. Il a promu au grade de lieutenant de la Marine royale le commandant du steamer qui lui a apporté la nouvelle du Coup d'Etat. Tous ceux qui ont approché ce jour là de sa Majesté ont été honorés d'une royale accolade ; il se croit enfin débarrassé de tous les dangers qui le menaçaient pour 18 ans. Dès que le roi de Naples se réjouit si fort, c'est une raison de plus pour tous les hommes sensés et modérés de s'affliger et c'est ce qui arrive à tous les véritables libéraux, à tous ceux qui détestent tous les excès et sont aussi opposés au violence du pouvoir absolu, qu'aux violences de la démagogie.

Si notre ami Bastiat avait vécu jusqu' à ce moment, il en serait certainement mort de chagrin.

Comme vous pensez bien je reste en dehors de toute fonction politique, et je rentre dans mon cabinet pour y reprendre quelques travaux d'économie politique. Il est douteux qu'on nous permette même la publication des livres les plus modérés, et il ne nous restera qu'à courber la tête pendant l'orage. Il faudrait ne pas compter sur la Providence, pour penser que nous ne verrons pas de meilleurs temps.

Vous êtes bien heureux de vivre dans un pays libre, où vous pouvez amener graduellement des réformes utiles, qui améliorent les conditions d'existence de la grande masse de la population, et vous évitent les chances de toute secousse violente.

On ne peut s'empêcher de se réjouir sur le continent de la retraite de Palmerston qui semblait se plaire à nous causer des embarras et auquel on ne pardonne pas sa conduite vis-à-vis de la Grèce.

J'espère que votre famille est en bonne santé ; présentez mes compliments empressés à Mrs Cobden. M^{me}. Say se joint à moi en cette occasion. Mon fils demande aussi à être rappelé à votre souvenir.—
 Votre ami très-dévoué, HORACE SAY.

X L I I.

Mr COBDEN to Mrs SCHWABE.

MIDHURST, 3rd January 1852.

MY DEAR MRS SCHWABE,—I learn from your letter to my wife that you wish for some particulars as to the reason why Palmerston has left the Cabinet.

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I can give you no news upon the subject, beyond the rumours contained in the papers, which, I suppose, are partly false, and partly true. There must be some special and sudden reason for the change. His colleagues so completely indorsed all his foreign policy at the time of Roebuck's motion for a vote of confidence, that it is not possible they can now turn round and quarrel with him upon his conduct *generally*. Probably his long impunity, and the confidence he had acquired in his own dexterity, and the contempt he felt for the majority of his colleagues and the House of Commons, had made him rash and indiscreet in his tactics. Of one thing I can assure you, from ten years' observation of the two men, Lord Granville is a more liberal man than his predecessor at the Foreign Office. What a spectacle does France present! How little did we understand the political character of its people. We knew as much of the politics of China as of our next neighbour. How I pity such men as Horace Say. Why don't they turn American or English?—Believe me, ever yours truly,

R. COBDEN.

X L I I I.

LETTER from Mr COBDEN to the 'EDITOR of THE TIMES,' on the Expected French Invasion Panic.
24th January 1852.

SIR,—Having looked in vain for one fact to justify the alarm of those who are calling upon us

to prepare for a French invasion, will you allow me to offer a few facts upon the other side of the question?

The levity with which your military correspondents *assume* a war to be in existence between France and England, and then enter upon a discussion of the strategy of the belligerents, might almost justify the doubt whether they have any notion of the almost insuperable obstacles which the vital interests of the two nations present to any such hostile collision. But I will say nothing of our own interest in the maintenance of peace, for we are told to contemplate war only as the result of an aggressive movement from our neighbours. I will confine myself to the French, who, to judge by what we hear from all sides, have no more at stake in the preservation of peace with England than had their barbarous ancestors fifteen centuries ago; and I am prepared to contend that, overpowering as are our motives for maintaining friendly relations with the French people, they are bound, in still heavier recognisances, to keep the peace with us. France, as a manufacturing country, is second only to England in extent, and superior in a great variety of its productions. Her foreign commerce, measured by exports and imports, is greater than that of any other people, ourselves excepted. But her navigation is insignificant when compared with that of England or the United States. Thus, to quote from their own standard authorities, while the French exports amount to £44,000,000 sterling per annum, or nearly three-fourths of our own, their mercantile tonnage bears to ours only the proportion of one to four. And in this last fact lies the conclusive proof that in any naval war between England and France (and it could be no other than a naval

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war), whatever might be the first effects of a surprise, of which we hear so much, the ultimate result must be in favour of the nation which possessed a fourfold resource in its mercantile marine. Public opinion in France recognises our maritime superiority, and it has been a tacit understanding in framing its naval budgets not to exceed two-thirds of our estimates for the same service. A war with England, then, implies a blockade of the French ports, and an interruption in the supply of the raw materials for employing the industrial population of that country, and the stoppage of the exports with which those supplies are purchased; it implies a convulsion at Rouen, Lyons, Mulhausen and Bordeaux; it implies famine and revolution in the faubourgs of Paris, for *there are more people employed in Paris in manufacturing articles for exportation than in any other three capitals in Europe*. And at whose instance are all these calamities to be encountered? We are told that the army must have employment and glory. (This, by the way, is rather a concession to the peace party, who contend that large standing armies are not calculated to prevent war.) But have we had one fact to show that the army of France is in the slightest degree in antagonism with the opinion of its population? On the contrary, is it not almost of necessity identified in feeling and objects with those from whom it is periodically drawn, and with whom it is in daily and hourly association? Can we shut our eyes to the fact that the votes of the French people, and not the bayonets of the soldiers, are the real source of Louis Napoleon's success? And were those suffrages given in a warlike spirit towards England or any other country? Ask M. Sallandrouze, who headed the *industriels* of Paris in a deputation which thanked

Louis Napoleon for having secured them peace and order—did he vote for war? Did Count D'Argout, the head of the Bank of France, in giving his adhesion—did he, with his 20,000,000 of treasure in his own coffers, contemplate a buccaneering expedition to London to plunder the Bank of England? Or, M. Odier, does he wish to see the finances of Europe thrown into confusion by a war with England? No, sir, it cannot be denied that it is to the adhesion of the industrious classes—agricultural, commercial, manufacturing, that the present head of the French nation owes his elevation. It was not merely the Bourse at Paris that gained instant confidence from the *coup d'état* of the 2d of December. As soon as the news of that event reached the great centres of employment throughout France a similar effect was produced. The letters received in England, within a week afterwards, from Rouen, Lyons, Nantes, Bordeaux, Avignon, etc., gave warning to our merchants not to calculate on a fall in prices in cottons, silks, wines, madders, corn, etc., but to look rather for a rise, in consequence of the revolution in Paris. We may deplore it, but deny it we cannot, that the wealth and industry of France repudiated its statesmen, its men of literary and scientific genius, and even its military heroes, to rally round one man. Was that man, in their opinion, the embodiment of peace and order, or of war? I humbly submit that the facts I have mentioned are a sufficient answer to the question. Let but one step be taken by the President to warrant the belief that he contemplated a war with England, and you would see repeated what occurred on the occasion of our threatened rupture with France upon the Syrian question, when a deputation from Bourdeaux and the other seaports hurried to Paris, gained an interview with Louis

Philippe *at night*, and refused to leave his presence until they had his assurance that there should be no war with England. A war with England! What do those words imply? An interruption of the foreign trade of France; a convulsion in all the seats of manufacturing industry; a falling off of 25 per cent. in the revenue; an addition of 50 per cent. to the expenditure; a fall of the *Rentes* to 50; and of railway shares and other stock in the same proportion. And yet we hear people talk as glibly about the French declaring war, or even making a piratical attack upon England without the slightest provocation, as if they had no more interest in preserving peace than so many Red Indians or Caffres.

In the teeth of every human motive for an opposite course of policy, the French will, we are told, pick a quarrel with England. Surely they who ask us to so far credit their opinion as to lay out further sums for our warlike armaments ought to be prepared to give us some facts, or at least one fact upon which to found their conclusions. I am open to conviction by facts, and facts only.

RICHARD COBDEN.

X L I V.

Mr COBDEN'S ADDRESS to the Electors of the West Riding of Yorkshire, *24th June* 1852.

GENTLEMEN,—A Protectionist Administration having called for a final judgment upon its policy from

the constituencies of the empire, I beg leave, as an advocate of Free Trade, to solicit the honour of again representing you in Parliament.

I will not insult your reason by offering to expose the evil influences of a policy which seeks to create an artificial scarcity of the bounties of Providence. The necessity for argument has been superseded by the experience of the last six years, which has demonstrated that a free importation of the necessaries of life confers not only great material advantages, but that it promotes the higher destinies of a people through the moral influences that flow from an abundant and easy satisfaction of their physical wants. In a word, Free Trade has accomplished the aim of the statesman by enriching and strengthening the nation, while it has fulfilled the desire of the philanthropist by carrying comfort and happiness to the homes of those who live by the daily labour of their hands. In expressing these sentiments, I am giving utterance to the convictions and feelings of nineteen-twentieths of the population of the kingdom.

How, then, in the face of this fact, do we witness the strange anomaly of a Protectionist party in power, a House of Commons feebly asserting a Free Trade policy, and the Queen appealing to the electors for their opinion upon a question on which the people have come to an all but unanimous decision? The cause of this state of things must be sought in the imperfections of our electoral system, which seems to be ingeniously contrived to prevent the majority in Parliament from reflecting with ease and accuracy the opinions of the majority of the nation. Let me illustrate this by one fact. In an assembly professing fairly to represent the country, I find myself associated with a hundred members, the aggregate

of whose constituencies do not equal in number, and still less in intelligence and wealth, the constituency which I have the honour to represent, and yet every one of them counts for as much as your member in a division list. Under such a system, majorities depend, in ordinary and tranquil seasons, more upon the skill of Parliamentary tacticians, the interests of powerful individuals, and the corrupting influences of wealth and patronage, than upon the force of public opinion. Such a representative system, instead of assisting the judgment of a Minister anxious to ascertain and meet the wants and wishes of his countrymen, is calculated to embarrass and mislead him ; and if a patriotic statesman, disregarding a Parliamentary majority, resolves on some great occasion to consult the welfare of the people, in opposition to the behests of the interested and powerful few, he is either thwarted in his efforts, or punished if successful by banishment from official life, while the people, who are raising monuments to his fame, are powerless to prevent his opponents from occupying the seat of power from which they have expelled him. Such a state of things is neither satisfactory nor secure. Our representation is not what it professes to be ; it will not bear investigation, and it does not work well. If it did, there would be no necessity for a dissolution to decide the fate of a Protectionist Administration. The true test of the worthiness of a people to enjoy free institutions is their capacity, by timely and wise amendments, to adapt them to the changing and advancing circumstances of the age. I trust that the people of England will for their next task undertake that reform in our electoral system which is called for by the state of public affairs, and which is necessary to bring into harmony the theory and practice of our free constitution.

For the present, however, it is our duty, by one more strong and united expression of opinion, to establish upon an imperishable foundation the principle of commercial liberty. That the advocates of monopoly should have made another special appeal to the country necessary, and thus retarded other important public questions, is to be regretted, so far as our domestic interests are concerned. But let us console ourselves with the belief that the decision now about to be come to by the electors of England will have a salutary influence abroad. Hitherto other nations have regarded only as an experiment our Free Trade measures, the reversal of which they have seen constantly threatened by the party now in power. They will shortly see a second Protectionist Government repudiate Protectionist principles. Then will commence the influence of our example upon foreign countries. I do not shrink from avowing my belief in the universal though tardy triumph of a principle which has been demonstrated in our own case to involve the well-being of the people and the prosperity of the Government. With the general diffusion of liberal commercial principles, I shall expect with confidence the growth of a more frank and generous international spirit, and, in spite of the backslidings of some from whom I had expected better things, and who have involved us in the cost of fresh preparations for war, I do not hesitate to declare my conviction, that the final triumph of Free Trade, which England is now about to consummate, will be the strongest guarantee that human hands can give for the observance of that divine precept which enjoins peace on earth and goodwill towards men.

Gentlemen, I have said that in tranquil and ordinary seasons the policy of Governments is made

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subservient to unworthy and sinister influences. Not so on an occasion like the present, when a ripe national question is about to be submitted to the ordeal of a general election. At such a crisis, Ministers and public men look for the final settlement of a great controversy to the larger constituencies, and especially to that of the West Riding, whose numbers, extent and wealth raise it so far above every other electoral community. I know that when the moment comes for recording your verdict, it will be, as it has ever been on all great occasions, on the side of humanity, peace and freedom.—I have the honour to be your faithful and obedient servant,

RICHARD COBDEN.

X L V.

EXTRACTS FROM MR COBDEN'S SPEECH at the PEACE
CONFERENCE, held at Manchester, *28th January*
1853.

MR CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,—I confess I have listened to those letters from our French correspondents with feelings of shame and humiliation,—shame, that it should be deemed necessary by our well-wishers on the other side of the Channel that they should give us assurances that there is no intention on the part of France to come and, without provocation, to invade our shores; and humiliation, that there should have been a considerable number of the people of this country who

could have been deluded by the merest child's cry, the mere baby's talk that we have been listening to for the last few months, and that they should have believed for a moment that anything so absurd and all but impossible was going to happen. Now, let me just call your attention to the source from which those assurances come. The outcry that we hear in this country about an invasion from France is levelled at the present Government of France. The parties who are addressing us are not the partisans of that Government. We have had a letter from M. Carnot; he is not a friend of the present Government. I have an extract here from the *Journal des Debats*, which is a pacific newspaper, not in the interests of Louis Napoleon, but a decided advocate of peace and Free Trade; and what is the tone in which that paper speaks of this cry of invasion in this country? It says, that 'whilst the British journals are every day accusing our Government of making large augmentations of its navy, we observe that, under this unfounded pretence, England is constantly adding to its fleet and other armaments; and we are led to believe that the English press can have no other object in thus declaiming against the imaginary armaments of France, than to conceal the real preparations that are going on in that country.' Well, you have had a letter from M. Emile de Girardin; he is not a partisan of the present Government; he was an exile after the last revolution, and he is expressing his doubts whether the preparations we are making for 'a disembarkation from France without object'—for, mind you, with his usual logic, he, in a word, has hit upon the whole point of this absurd outcry,—these preparations, he is rather inclined to think, there must

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be something else to account for, than the absurd supposition that we are preparing for a descent upon France *without an object*; because nobody has ever professed that there is any object; we have had no quarrel; there is no dispute, no unsettled boundary, no Spanish marriages, no Tahiti question, no Mr Pritchard; there is no quarrel at all; and, when I ask our invasionist friends *what* it is the French are coming here for, I never could hear an intelligible answer. Sometimes they say that some five thousand men are coming here to burn down one of our towns, and yet they admit these men will never go back again! I am as much at a loss as M. de Girardin is to see any logical ground for any such attempt as that, and you may depend upon it, that you are apt to under-rate the effect of all this kind of menacing demonstration here. The effect will be precisely the contrary of what these alarmists want. Instead of damaging Louis Napoleon, you will unite all parties in France with him as against England. And that is the great evil of such demonstrations as this,—you make every man in France, that has one atom of self-respect, or of French spirit in his blood,—you make him feel indignant, that you have lowered him and his country to the rank of savages, in supposing that they are to come here some day, without notice, without declaration of war,—a thing that never happened in any civilised country in the world; and you are assuming that it is going to be done some day, without any fact to warrant it; and you are making all the preparation that he sees in your ports in order to receive those savages.

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I have been told, I confess candidly, by political

friends as well as political enemies, that I was doing myself a great deal of harm by allowing it to be thought that I was opposed to all defensive armament. My answer has been :—If anybody believes that of me, and chooses to make that a reproach to me, I don't suppose that if I disabused them it would do much good, for they would be sure to find something else, to invent something else ; and besides, I said I have so much respect for those gentlemen who belong to the Peace Society, and see that they are doing so much good, that I don't feel disposed at all to say anything that should appear, or be construed to imply anything like a slight or disapproval of their conduct. But it is very well known to my friend Mr Sturge, and others with whom I have acted,—they have known very well that although I am as anxious as they are to put an end to war at once and for ever, and see universal peace, yet that I was not educated in the principles of the Society of Friends, and it is generally to our education that we are indebted for our principles. And I have never avowed, I should be hypocritical if I avowed that I entertained the opinion that, if attacked, if molested in an unprovoked manner, I would not defend myself from such an act of aggression. Nobody, I presume, who wishes to do me justice, ever dreamed that I would do so. But it was not necessary, because I found everyone bullying and crying, 'We will remind them of Waterloo ; we will sing "Rule Britannia ;" we will remind them of Trafalgar and the Nile ;'—it was not necessary I should join in reminding them of that. But I have had my opinions as well as the great body of my countrymen, that an unprovoked attack would find, I dare say, as resolute a resistance from me as many of those who are now

crying out in a panic, and who, I suspect, would be very likely to run away from the enemy. Now, gentlemen, the Peace Society has just as tolerant views towards me as I have towards them. The Peace Society has never attempted to coerce me into their principles of non-resistance. I must say I have never found them attempting to make a proselyte of me. They perfectly understand what my views are on this subject,—that I will put an end to war if I can, but will submit to no injustice if I can prevent it.

XLVI.

MR COBDEN TO MRS SCHWABE.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, 13th May 1853.

MY DEAR MRS SCHWABE,—Will you do me the favour to put this letter in that capacious bag which always travels with you, and when you go to your beautiful marine retreat to inquire into the truth of the statement, and if you find it correct, to further oblige me by giving the poor man a sovereign for me, which I will repay you with thanks. I think the printer who allowed this simple poet to print 7000 copies of *Paul before Agrippa* ought to be made responsible for his ruin. It is an incident for Dickens or the authoress of *Mary Barton*! I once before heard of a poor Devonshire parson who ordered 2000 copies of a sermon to be published, of which only three were purchased. But in that

case Rivington the publisher generously made him a present of the whole edition. The Welsh printers are not so liberal it seems.—Believe me, yours very sincerely,
R. COBDEN.

X L V I I.

SPEECH delivered by Mr COBDEN at the PEACE CONFERENCE, held at Edinburgh, 12th October 1853.

I have never alluded in the House of Commons or elsewhere, that I am aware of, to that most consummate triumph which this Conference has effected in the change that has taken place since we met at Manchester on the subject of a French aggression. But it is necessary to allude to it now, because the very same pens are being dipped in venom to record jibes and sneers against this Conference that we had to encounter at Manchester ; and, though I do not want to deny them the pleasure of abusing and caricaturing us, we have a fair right to ask the people of this country to estimate the value of their present views of these individuals by the value of their opinions just six months ago. But more—I say the present position of this country with reference to the Russian empire is distinctly to be traced to the conduct which these foolish people pursued nine months ago. I do not speak vaguely or idly. I speak from information short only of information from the first parties acting in these proceedings, when I say that that which has been done in the East by the Emperor

of Russia was done on the deliberate calculation that it was impossible France and England could unite to oppose him. We all know that it is an old traditional policy of the Russian Empire to encroach on the dominions of the Mahomedan people that are at its side. We know that has been a maxim of State policy in Russia for the last 150 years ; but we know also that the encroachments of Russia on Turkey have been steadily resisted—not at all times successfully, but still resisted — by the combined action of the Western Powers of Europe, who have held it as a part of the State policy of Europe to oppose the aggressions of Russia in the East. The Russian Emperor saw, not only in the public prints but in the speeches of our statesmen in the House of Commons, the expression of opinions of mistrust and a horror of the character of the Sovereign of our next neighbour, France. He saw that in the House of Commons we made provision for calling out the militia, avowedly in order to resist the French invasion. We heard men, who now, we are told, are the trustworthy peacemakers of this country, say that in one night 60,000 French might come from Cherbourg and land on our shores. We were told that for the peace party to assume for a moment the possibility that the Emperor of the French was not a brigand or a pirate, or to argue for a moment that the French people were not capable of throwing themselves on our shores without a declaration of war, and without notice and without any offence, like a body of buccaneers or pirates, was to act the part of the most credulous and foolish fanatics. The Emperor of Russia saw and heard all this, and he naturally concluded that it was utterly impossible France and England could unite again to resist his encroachments on the East of Europe.

His plans have been laid in the southern parts of Russia ever since September and October, when this cry began, and they were steadily pursued as this foolish spirit of hostility to our neighbours of France was more and more manifested in high quarters. And now the consequence is that the Emperor of Russia has found, when it is too late, that the foolish people whose views he mistook for the public opinion of England have entirely misled him. We were denounced as credulous and foolish for saying that possibly the Emperor Louis Napoleon did not meditate an invasion of our shores ; but what do we now see? The very Minister who talked of the French coming from Cherbourg in one night with 60,000 men to attack us, I heard myself state, that now France and England were united, and had one common bond of interest—that they were actuated by sentiments of mutual confidence and esteem, and constituted a power against which it was in vain for Russia to contend, for all Europe would be powerless against such a resistless combination. And what did we hear in the Queen's Speech at the end of the Session? As if to give the Peace Society the climax of its triumph, we were told in the Queen's Speech that she was on the best terms of amity with the French nation, and she rather went out of her way to add that she was also on the best footing of friendship with the Emperor of the French. Now, suppose a person who had been ordered, as many persons are for the benefit of their health, to take a sea voyage, had left our shores for Australia last January, and had returned again after making the circuit of the globe, what would be his experience? When he left England he saw us preparing a militia, fortifying our coasts, and general officers writing to me offer-

ing to lay wagers that the French were coming over. He saw our inspectors of cavalry and artillery moving about the southern coast, deputations from the railway companies waiting on the Admiralty and Ordnance to see how soon the Commissariat and Ordnance supplies might be transmitted from the Tower to Dover and Portsmouth. He left in the midst of all these preparations to meet a French invasion, and then he makes the circuit of the globe, seeing no newspapers—for one of the motives for sending such a careworn individual on such a voyage is to keep him away from politicians and the post-office—he comes back and lands in England in the month of September, and the first thing he reads in the newspapers is, that the French and English fleets are lying side by side, with their broadsides to each other, in Besika Bay. He immediately says there is going to be a great battle now; but, on turning to the leading articles of the very papers that told him when he left that the French Emperor was a brigand and a pirate, ready to invade us without any declaration of war, the first thing he sees is, that France and England are cordially united; that the combined fleets are in Besika Bay under the command of Admiral Dundas, and that we are prepared, if necessary, to send out our army to be put under the command of the French General, and that they are going into action, probably to-morrow, with the Russian fleet. The first thing he would naturally ask would be, 'Can you trust this individual, whom you were not long ago calling a brigand and a pirate? Has anything happened to prove that the peace people were right in their views? What has this man done? Has he given you any guarantee that when you go into action

with the Russian fleet he has not previously had an understanding with the Emperor of Russia, and that, instead of joining you in pouring your broadsides into the Russian fleet, he will not aid Russia in demolishing yours? Unless he has undergone a great change, he may come back, after having destroyed your fleet, land on your coast, ravage your towns, burn your houses, seize the Bank, and carry off the Queen.' I say it with regret that my experience of late does not not make me think more highly than I used to do of the ability of statesmanship in this country, because if those men, having to conduct the public affairs of the country, were in earnest in what they told us six or nine months ago regarding this Government and this individual—if they were in earnest—if they were not charlatans, imposing on us at that time, what is the meaning of this kaleidoscope sort of exhibition? Why, there is nothing on the stage—nothing but a pantomime ever equalled it. They have given us no reason for the change that has taken place. The same men are now in office who were drawing out the militia, and increasing, or at least sanctioning, the increase of our armaments, for the purpose of providing against the attack of this individual. I say, if they were in earnest, then how can they be justified in trusting our ships alongside the ships of such a man? And if they were not in earnest, what sort of men have we got in office? I want to have an explanation about this. I will not say anything more about these people, for they are sufficiently humiliated already. If I did not pity all those who were talking so six months ago—if I had not the spirit of a friend of peace, and wanted to forget and forgive, I could not have had a greater triumph than to bring down all the papers, and read

extracts from what they were saying about us at the time we met in Manchester. Do you not remember the caricature, in which your humble servant was represented with long ears, because I stated that we did not believe the French were coming to invade us? Who has got the long ears and fool's cap now? I have alluded to all this, to show that there is a large number of people in this country who are ready to believe anything that is told them about some foreign foe coming to attack us. And the reason is this:—we have too many people in this country who are ignorant of the state of society in foreign countries, and who do not do justice to the condition in which the people are placed in other countries. They have too depreciatory an opinion both of their economical condition and their moral qualities, or they never would believe these things. We are not sufficiently informed, and cannot be sufficiently informed as to what is going on in other countries. That is one great reason why I should argue against lending ourselves to any interference in the affairs of foreign countries. In the first place, however wise we may be, we know much more of our own affairs than of others'. The Spaniards, who have a great number of wise sayings, have a proverb which says,—'A fool knows more of what is going on in his own house than a wise man of what is going on in his neighbour's.' But we now find fools getting together and crying out for war with Russia on the Eastern question. I have seen with amazement an amount of ignorance as to the condition of the Turkish Empire exactly parallel with that shown with regard to the condition of France, and precisely by the same persons, by persons of whom I should have expected that of all men in the world they

would have had a knowledge of these affairs. For instance, with reference to the condition of European Turkey and the Christian population there, I find the most singular ignorance. I would have thought that the great body of the people here should have been actuated by their democratic sympathies in favour of the mass of the people of Turkey; but I find that their sympathies are with the minority, who are a dominant class tyrannising over and oppressing the Christian population of Turkey. I do not say this is any reasonable ground for going to war; but if you are going to war it is of all things necessary that you should know what you are going to do; or you may incur all the expense that was caused by the French war, and at the same time, totally fail to accomplish the end you have in view. From my knowledge of the Turkish Empire, I venture to tell you that not only 'all the King's horses and all the King's men, but all the horses and all the men of all the emperors in the world, will fail to maintain the Mahomedan population of Turkey in Europe. There are seeds of decay and dissolution, founded on the very nature of things that you cannot combat by fleets and armies. It may be said, 'Why are you so presumptuous in saying so?' I can only say that I have been there to look, and I have, moreover, for twenty years, been paying attention to this subject. I do not profess to know more than other people may know if they would only inquire. Twenty years ago I commenced writing on this Russian and Turkish question, as Mr Tait, the publisher, knows. It does not follow, certainly, that because I began to write about the Turkish question I know more about it than other people, but from that time to this I have not only visited Turkey, but

endeavoured to make myself acquainted with all that has been written on the subject. I must say, therefore, that I have seen with amazement the prevalent ignorance in this country as to what they are going to fight about, viz., the maintenance of the Mussulman in Europe. I say the laws of the Koran are in opposition to the law of nature, which is the law of God, and Mussulmans, being subject to the Koran, cannot be perpetuated alongside of the population of Christian Europe. I do not say I want a religious war. I want Turkey to be left alone, and, if you leave them alone, you will see the operation of that law. There are, it is understood, from 3,000,000 to 4,000,000 of Turks, and 11,000,000 or 12,000,000 of Christians, though, as there has been no census, no one can pretend to give the numbers with accuracy. The Turks have been for 400 years a dominant race; they have had all the power in the country, they have administered the law, and are the sole part of the population that are armed. The Christians have been treated like dogs, and they are called dogs. The Koran acknowledges no relationship between the Mahomedan and the Christian but that of master and slave. Either to kill them or to make them pay tribute is the distinctive law of the Koran. But, in spite of all this, what is the result? The Turks are a decaying people. If any man was disposed to be friendly to them, it was Lamartine, and yet Lamartine says Turkey is perishing for want of Turks. Notwithstanding all their advantages, the Turks are declining and diminishing in numbers, while the Christians are constantly increasing by their side. But, not merely that, all the wealth, all the accumulation of wealth, all the enterprise, all the intelligence, all the progress, in fact, whether moral or material, belongs to the Christian popula-

tion of European Turkey. Now you may hear of a superior governing an inferior race, as in our Indian Empire ; but that is where all the wealth, the intelligence and the progress, and all the resources of science are on the side of the dominant race ; but you never could and never will know of a race perpetuating its rule over another when all these conditions are reversed. Then, this being the condition of things, the Emperor of Russia steps in, and says, 'I intend to insure to these Christians under the authority of the Porte the same treatment which Christians under the protection of the French Government have in Turkey.' Now, England steps in and France steps in to resist this demand, and they advise the Sultan to oppose it, because we say Russia meditates some selfish and aggressive designs. That is very true, but let me tell you that the people of this world—that is, the unprivileged masses of all countries—have ever gained their privileges and franchises by being lifted up by some nobles or tyrannical kings, who have had a sinister object in trying to enlist their sympathies. It was by catering for the sympathies of the millions on the part of these nobles and kings that the masses of this country were raised from serfdom to citizenship, and no doubt the Russian Emperor wishes to carry out some sinister object of his own at the present moment. He wishes to establish an *imperium in imperio* in Turkey, and I have not the least doubt that he will succeed. I speak with great diffidence, because I do not think that anybody not there on the spot, and having the best opportunities of knowing what is the condition of things there, is capable of speaking with authority ; but, from all I can learn, these Christians are glad to get increased and improved toleration and security against Mussulman

wrong and violence, be it by the intervention of Russia or of any other Power. Take one fact, which has transpired since this hubbub began. It has come out that until Russia made this interference the Christian population of Turkey in Europe could not give evidence in any court of law against any Mussulman murderer or thief, or anyone who committed any act of violence either on the family or on the persons or property of any of them. That is a state of society worse, than even negro slavery in America. But we are told that since the intervention by Russia an edict has emitted from the Sultan giving to the Christians the right to give evidence against a Mussulman in a court of law. Does anybody doubt that the Christians will attribute this great boon they have received—a boon which, for the first time for four centuries, gives them the rights of citizenship—to the intervention of the Emperor of Russia? My opinion is that, from the first, there has been a great mistake in this matter. If we intended to interfere in the matter, we should have done what, I believe, we shall come to do yet: we should have joined Russia in insisting on the fullest religious liberty and perfect social equality for the great majority of the Christians in Turkey in Europe—that is, if we interfere at all, for my opinions are too well known to render it possible for me to disguise them. What I would say is, leave them to themselves, but if you interfere in any way at all the only practicable way in which they could hope to accomplish any good is to join with Russia, as you have joined with her when you were not one whit more sincere, in obtaining those rights and franchises which the Christian people of Turkey demand. But there seems to me to be a leaning towards the Turks in this matter which

would have appeared to me as very extraordinary unless I had been accustomed to see those passing fallacies and hallucinations that come over the English people from time to time. The leaning in this country seems to be on the side of Turkey, simply because Russia is coming with some sinister design upon Turkey; and there has been sent abroad the most gross misrepresentations as to the condition of the Turkish population in Turkey. I must confess I never was more astonished in my life than on hearing a nobleman, who has been for ten or twelve years Foreign Minister in this country, and who, if any man in England ought to know the condition of Turkey in Europe, ought to know something about it, say, in his place in Parliament,—‘I assert, without fear of contradiction, that Turkey, so far from having gone back within the last thirty years, has made greater progress and improvement in every possible way than perhaps was ever made by any other country during the same period. Compare the condition of Turkey now with what it was in the reign of the Sultan Mahmoud, either with regard to the system of government as bearing upon the interests of the inhabitants, the state of the army and navy, the administration of justice, the condition of agriculture, manufactures and commerce, or religious toleration. I venture to say that, in all these respects, Turkey has made immense progress during the period I have mentioned.’ Now, I say, where are the proofs of that? Consult any writer who has visited Turkey. Consult Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, who, when he left the Embassy on leave of absence eighteen months ago, was entertained by the British population at Constantinople to a banquet, and who there referred to ‘the

corruption which eats into the very foundations of society, and a combination of force, fraud and intrigue which obstructs the march of progress and poisons the very atmosphere in which they prevail.' And again he alludes, with the profoundest grief, to the signs of weakness and error which surround him, to the financial embarrassments of the Government, and the great charter issued by the present Sultan being discredited by the non-execution of its promises. This is the opinion of a great and experienced diplomatist on the subject; and if he could say as much, and if every recent writer on the subject up to the latest gives the same opinion, what must the present condition of Turkey in Europe be? I must confess that I never was more astonished in my life than on hearing that statement of the noble lord. It appears to me that we are running, from some cause or another, precisely the same course as in the French invasion panic. For a moment of temporary triumph, for a mere momentary cheer, we have statesmen making statements of this description; and I record here my deliberate and solemn conviction that what I have read here of the speech of Lord Palmerston was the very thing in his speech which, of all others, he would be most reluctant to see reproduced on this or any other occasion. But, I say, what can be the motive of misleading the people of the country on this or on any other subject? Are we to be expected to go blindly into a war to accomplish an impossibility? Does anybody that knows Turkey believe that a war with Russia would ever leave the Turks remaining as a people in Europe, with three times the number of Christians around them, and these possessing all the wealth

and all the enterprise of the country, though totally disarmed? I say, why are we proposing to rush blindly into this war? There may be one interpretation of it. It is possible that our Government has told Turkey that if she will resist these attempts of Russia we shall support her; and I have no hesitation in saying that if our Government has said this, they are bound to support Turkey. If I were not standing here I would say that if you take a feeble man and tell him that, instead of yielding to the strong man that is coming against him, you will join him in fighting him—whether it is the case of a nation or an individual—I say that he is a skulking scoundrel that runs away after giving that advice. But we are not going to have war now. Wars do not happen on the Danube in November or October. We have got till April at least, and in the meantime all this matter will be so changed in position, if not totally reversed, that we can take a new choice of attitude upon the Eastern question. The sooner the people of England understand the position of Turkey the better. It is not a question of Russian invasion on us. It is an invasion, no doubt, on an unoffending power. Russia has no quarrel with the Turkish Government, but is it on that ground that we are called upon to exercise vengeance upon Russia—because Russia encroaches on Mahomedan power in Europe. Why, we have ourselves got the Great Mogul, a Mahomedan sovereign, who rules over three times the dominion of the Sultan, divested of his authority, and shut up as a puppet in Delhi. We have trampled down as large an empire in Burmah, and with as little ceremony as a ruffian would go into the market-place and kick down an apple-stall. Are we, who

do these things in the face of the world, to exercise God's vengeance on any other country for doing the same things? No! that is not a ground that we can take up. There is not hypocrisy enough extant to say that we are bound to go and prevent injustice on the Mahomedans in Europe when we have done far worse on Mahomedans where they are nearer home—I mean in Asia. But they say it is because we have treaties with the Turks that we are going to fight their battles. I am just throwing these things before you; you will have plenty of time to consider them, as we are not going to have a fight on the Danube in the month of November. The opposing armies there will have to fight, not with one another, but with pestilence and swamp, and cold and starvation and fever—they will be too much occupied with these grim enemies to contend against each other. You are not going to fight for treaties; you have no treaties to fight about. Look into any of those newspapers that are raising the war-cry, and calling for the fulfilment of our treaties with Turkey. They do not know but what we have a treaty which binds us to fight for the maintenance of Turkey; that is, to keep the lines on the map the same as they now are; though I hardly know anybody who knows what the bounds of Turkey are. The thing is an absurdity. We have no treaty with Turkey. There have been settlements from time to time, as that in which Turkey called in France and England to rescue her from the Pasha of Egypt. There was a treaty defining certain conditions on which the Pasha of Egypt should have Egypt hereditary in his family, and there are other treaties of a similar kind to which we were parties. But we are not bound by

any treaty to defend the integrity of the Turkish Empire. If America were to take Turkey to-morrow—if she were to take possession of Asia Minor, and keep it for her debt—we are not bound to go to war with America. And so in regard to the other arguments we have heard. We are not bound in any way to be parties to anything that may happen in Turkey. We are not bound to interfere, either externally or internally. We are bound not to violate the treaties we have made by upsetting the settlement which we have been parties to; but we are not bound to fight to preserve those territorial arrangements, if other people choose to interfere with them. It has been settled, with regard to the greatest territorial treaty that ever was entered into—the treaty of Vienna—by which the whole boundaries of Europe were defined—it has been settled, by the Earl of Aberdeen and the Duke of Wellington—by the Whig party and all who were parties to it, that while we are bound not to violate that treaty, we are not bound to go to war to maintain the integrity of the countries, the boundaries of which were fixed by that treaty. Therefore, if you hear anybody filling up a phrase about a treaty, ask him to tell you where that treaty is, the date of it, and where to find it. And so it is in regard to the word ‘ally.’ We are bound to go to war to defend our ancient ally. We have had more treaties with Russia than with Turkey, and we are not bound by any treaties whatever to maintain Turkey, any more than to maintain Tuscany or Holland, or any other Power. Divest the question of those points that touch the honour of the nation, and then you bring it to what it really is—to a question of self-interest. I am not going to enter into that subject. I am sorry I

have trespassed so long upon your time; but I am going to enter into the subject to-morrow at the public meeting. Let us have as large a public meeting as we can have, and let us have the matter talked over here and throw down the truth before the public; and I have no doubt that they will be more disposed to take the truth from you, than they will be to take error from those who proved themselves so unworthy to be their guides some six or eight months ago.

XLVIII.

Mrs COBDEN to Mrs SCHWABE.

DOME HOUSE, BOGNOR,
October 29th, 1853.

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Many thanks to you for your offer to send *The Times*, but we noticed the article you name; but it is not the first by many in which that paper takes up Mr Cobden's arguments after having a few days before heartily abused him for giving them utterance. I remarked its compliment on Mr Cobden's educational speech. However, neither its praise nor its censure makes much impression upon me. I have faith that my dear husband acts conscientiously, and that truth and upright principles must triumph in the end.

XLIX.

Mr COBDEN to Mrs SCHWABE.

BOGNOR, 31st October 1853.

MY DEAR MRS SCHWABE,—Since my wife wrote her letter, yours of yesterday has come to hand. I have only time to say that Lord Ashley is one of the unpaid Commissioners of the *Board of Health*, of which Chadwick is the stipendiary chief, and doubtless the latter, if not his lordship, thought I was by implication putting down their Board as useless, in arguing that education could alone enable people to keep themselves out of filth and disease. But I am more and more of the opinion I expressed to you—that it is not easy to help even an individual who cannot help himself, and quite impossible to raise up whole classes by any other means than enabling them by education to help themselves. However, I do not think it necessary to get into a controversy with his lordship, who means well and is doing good in his way. And why should a man not have a right to choose his own mode of serving his fellow-creatures?—I remain, very truly yours,

R. COBDEN.

30 GROSVENOR ST., LONDON, 9th July 1854.

MY DEAR MRS SCHWABE,—Accept my best thanks for your kindness in sending me *Theologia Germanica*, and the Rev. Ed. Irving's Pamphlet on Education. The former I have not yet read, but must reserve it for a more leisure season; the

latter I have looked through, and although I cannot avoid admiring the style of the preacher (whose eloquence for a season or two threw into the shade all our pulpit orators), yet I must confess I think the views he puts forth on the subject of education are somewhat narrow and sectarian. He seems to be haunted with the idea that secular instruction must necessarily be irreligious unless watched over by clergymen. In fact, he would make every school keep its chaplain, like a ship-of-war or a prison. There is a party still living amongst us which shares the same bigoted and unworthy suspicions. Nothing can be more groundless than the alarms of those who fear that there is some covert design on the part of the advocates of secular instruction to undermine the faith of the people, and disseminate infidel doctrines. They forget that an ample provision is already made for the support of religious teachers in this country. Nowhere else is so much money spent, in proportion to the population, for the maintenance of places of worship and the support of Christian ministers as in England. But, unfortunately, we cannot say so much for the provision for secular instruction. *There* we are infinitely behind the United States and some other countries. Nearly one-third of all the young men and women who are married are unable to sign their names, and probably a quarter of them would not be found able to read a chapter in the Bible. Now this, in a Protestant country, is very disgraceful. And instead of clergymen opposing those who, whilst leaving unimpaired the means of religious instruction, propose to supply this sad deficiency of secular knowledge, they ought to be the first to applaud them for endeavouring to repair so crying an evil. At least, the clergy ought to be prepared

themselves to educate the people, and not stand like the dog in the manger to prevent others from doing so. I am uncharitable enough to agree with the Archbishop of Dublin in a remark he made at the Athenæum meeting in Manchester—that many people profess to join the education movement merely to be able to retard its progress. However, I will not fall into an uncharitable vein. There is no excuse for my doing so in replying to your kind letter, which is so full of the milk of human charity and kindness.

MIDHURST, 25th August 1854.

MY DEAR MRS SCHWABE,—The gentleman to whom I gave a letter of introduction to Lord Shaftesbury is the Rev. Mr Ellerby, who for many years was minister of the Congregational Church (British and American) in St Petersburg, and who returned to England a few months ago in consequence of the war. He wished to see Lord Shaftesbury to correct some erroneous statements attributed to him in the report of his speech in the House of Lords respecting the circulation of the Bible in Russia. Mr Ellerby says that Protestant Bibles are allowed to be imported into Russia for the use of the *Lutheran* population in that empire; and I have seen the same statement in a letter written privately by the Rev. Mr Law (a relation of Lord Ellenborough), who was for ten years the Episcopal clergyman at St Petersburg. The latter says in his letter that he has imported large numbers of Bibles into Russia, which were liable, *as books*, to a high rate of duty, but that on application to the Emperor to allow them to be admitted free he has invariably had the duty remitted. It is true that Bibles, or other books, are not allowed to be circulated amongst the members.

of the Established Greek Church for purposes of proselytism. The law permits dissenters from the national church to have their Bible, and enjoy freedom of worship, but does not tolerate conversions from the State religion. Lord Shaftesbury drew a favourable picture of the state of religious freedom in Turkey as compared with Russia. But he did not state the case fairly. It is true that in Turkey the *Christians* are at liberty to belong to any sect, or change their creed as often as they like. But the *Mahometans*, who correspond to the members of the established religion in Russia, are not allowed to become Christians, or change their religion at all. In this respect, which is the only fair way of comparing them, the two countries are very much upon the same footing. The only difference probably is, that if a Russian apostatises from the orthodox Greek Church he is imprisoned or otherwise persecuted, whilst if a Turk deserts Mahomet to follow Christ his head is cut off. I do not know whether Mr Ellerby saw Lord Shaftesbury, but it was to explain the above that he contemplated having an interview with him. He said he was surprised at his inaccuracy upon a subject on which he ought to have been better informed, as he is at the head of the British and Foreign Bible Society, which has been in the habit of sending Bibles to Russia to the care of Mr Ellerby himself.—And believe me, ever faithfully yours,

R. COBDEN.

MIDHURST, 24th Oct. 1854.

MY DEAR MRS SCHWABE,—I did not answer your last kind letter for some time, because I was not sure whether I might not have the pleasure of giving you the rendezvous in London. However, I was prevented meeting you there, and I now

merely write to say how glad I was to find that one clergyman at least had not forgotten to act up to the precepts of Christianity by opposing the war. I should certainly feel happy to have the opportunity of making Mr Owen's* acquaintance. In answer to your inquiry, it would not be difficult to show how the war, if *successful*, may, and, I believe, will have an injurious effect upon our best interests. It will inflame the war spirit, and betray the nation into a false reliance upon the sword, and divert public attention from those moral ameliorations upon which, far more than on military triumphs, the fate of empires depends. I have no fear of the aggressions of a semi-barbarous people like the Russians, so long as we are a more moral, sober, intelligent and industrious community; but I am afraid of the rivalry of other countries, and especially the United States, if we neglect the education of our people, and allow them to advance in the arts of peace, whilst we give ourselves up to the intoxication of martial victories. This, my dear friend, in a few words, is how I can foresee that Heaven may punish us even in our successes.

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R. COBDEN.

* Rector of St Asaph.

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SPEECH delivered by Mr COBDEN on the CRIMEAN
WAR at a Public Meeting held at Leeds, 17th
January 1855.

Now, I am not come here merely to talk about the history and the origin of the war which we are unhappily engaged in ; that is a question which we cannot any longer affect by any argument here. The war exists, and we have to deal with it as we now find it. I am not going to speak of the past history of Russia or the past history of Turkey ; nor am I going back into those voluminous Blue Books which deal with the origin, always somewhat obscure, of this war—sprung, as it has done, out of a vast deal of not very intelligible diplomatic correspondence. I say, that by going back to this correspondence and those historical details, we shall not prevent the war which is now already in existence ; but as a Member of Parliament, on whom will devolve the task of providing means for the continuance of this war, I have a vast deal to think of in reference to its further discussion, as I cannot divest myself of the functions appertaining to the position in which I am placed. I think that the most important business which is coming before us next Session is, how and in what manner shall we carry on this war ;—because I cordially agree with what has been said, that if England is to have a war, you cannot have a little war, and that you must carry it on with the energy and conduct

becoming a great nation like this. Very well, but that will require money, and not one farthing of money can be had unless it comes from a vote of the House of Commons; and, as a member of that House, I am obliged to say yes or no to every proposition of that kind. Now, I want, in the first place, to say a few words to you on the subject of the supplies to carry on this war; and I think our Government, and even Mr Gladstone, the Chancellor of the Exchequer—much as I respect his character—have rather lent themselves to the delusion that they could indulge the people of this country with a cheap war. Mr Gladstone told us he wanted but ten millions. We voted ten millions, and you have the opportunity of judging how the money is being spent. You can form some idea, if we are to carry on this war as it must be carried on if it is to continue, how long this ten millions will last. Why, it is gone already! Now, what is it we are proposing to do? We are engaged in a war with Russia, and we are carrying on that war in the Russian territory. Now, let me put the case another way. Suppose, instead of that, that Russia threatened this country with an invasion of 100,000 men, what would be the consequence? Why, before one thousand men had landed, there would be a levy, *en masse*, of the population, and you would have voted £50,000,000 for the purpose of repelling the aggression. But let me tell you, that to carry on a war in Russia is a far more difficult and costly affair than to defend yourselves against foreign invasion. I want to tell you that this war is one which will involve enormous and costly sacrifices; and I want you first to consider, and to have your opinion of the way in which the money is to be raised, and we will come to the question of

the conduct of the war afterwards. Now, there are two or three voices on this subject; some say we should have a loan; others say we should provide the necessary funds by direct taxation; and others, again, that we should do it by indirect taxation. Now, I come to tell you frankly my opinion on this matter, and I say that I look with great alarm to a renewal of our system of funded debt. I look with great apprehension to a recommencement of the system of loaning, and I think the labour of this country is sufficiently mortgaged already. The question is whether you are going to burden yourselves or your posterity for this war, and whether you will burden yourselves or your children? For I, like most of you, have children; and if we are to carry on this war, I cannot help looking at this question with reference to my posterity. But there are various disadvantages connected with a loan. It is dangerous to give a Government too great facility of raising money, for they may spend it too fast, because they raise it too easily. Whether you are for war or for peace on this occasion, on principle I think it is a wholesome check on a Government that they should not be able to raise money too easily for the purpose of carrying on war; and I think it is a dispensation of Providence itself that there should be difficulties in the case of war—that there should be hardships to encounter and sacrifices to make. I think it is beneficial to every country that we should have these difficulties in carrying on war. If you come to the question of direct taxation, I have no hesitation in saying that, in theory, I would advise that the money should be raised by direct taxation, because you raise it with the least possible cost in collecting it, and you raise it, also, with the

least injury to the trade and commerce of the country ; but we all know that, upon the present scale of income-tax, it will be quite impossible to raise money to carry on this war. You must lower the range of the tax, and embrace smaller incomes, or you must divide it with indirect taxation, and I think that is what we must come to. But I shall be very sorry indeed to see a revival of those taxes which were once considered necessary for the protection of the manufactures and commerce of the country ; and I tell you frankly, that I shall, on every occasion, as far as my personal feeling and opinion may be concerned, vote for direct instead of indirect taxation. As for the war itself, I have told you that I am not going to detain you with a long historical account of its origin, but at the same time I will certainly take exception to a remark made by the Chairman, who seemed to think I was going to address you as the advocate and champion of peace at all price. Now, gentlemen, it is rather unfair that we should be held responsible for opinions that we have never avowed, or uttered, or professed, or entertained. There is a respectable body of Christians in this country, very influential by their character, if not by their ancestors' names, who put the interpretation on the New Testament that war under any circumstances is contrary to the precepts of Christianity ; but these gentlemen themselves have never attempted to force their religious opinions on the policy of the country ; and I have been requested again and again by the Society of Friends to disavow their doctrines and opinions, because they knew I should be charged with entertaining them, and feared that I should lose all influence with practical minds in the advocacy of peace principles. Now, let us, at this time, discuss this question as a question of policy, and of policy only.

My first and greatest objection to this war, gentlemen, has been the delusive, I had almost said fraudulent, pretences under which it has been made popular in this country. I mean that the feelings of the people have been roused into enthusiasm in favour of this war, by being led to entertain the belief that it was to effect objects which I knew and felt, at all events, it never was intended to effect. Now, will anybody for a moment deny that, twelve or fifteen months ago, when the first excitement in favour of a war with Russia took place—will anybody deny that that which carried forward the mass of the people of this country in favour of a war against Russia, was, that it had for its object to give freedom to struggling nationalities on the continent of Europe, and that it would have for its effect to put a check upon the proceedings of Russia—with reference I mean to the invasion of Hungary, and the conquest of Circassia, or the occupation of other countries? Does anybody for a moment deny that the prevalent opinion of the people of this country was, that in going to war against Russia you were going to inscribe on your banners the re-constitution of Polish nationality? Well, I have sat in the House of Commons with my late friend, Lord Dudley Stuart, for about twelve years, and I thought he represented a great amount of public opinion in this country, and I know very well that he and those who acted with him were of opinion that this war had objects such as I have referred to. I mean that it aimed at restoring liberty to Poland, and the restoring of the rights of other nationalities. Now, gentlemen, I have never viewed it in that light, for I never believed it would have any such consequences. I have looked upon this war as a war of policy only. I have looked

upon it as a political war, a war of diplomatists and statesmen, and not as being undertaken for the interests or the rights of freedom at all. Why, it is a war, in other words, and in the fewest words I can use, it is a war in which we have a despot for an enemy, a despot for an ally, and a despot for a client ; and we have been for twelve months trying to make an ally of another despot, and we have not succeeded. Now, gentlemen, looking at the war as it really is—a war in opposition to Russian encroachments upon Turkey—I say, if that is the case, all I object to is, that I think we have been a little too precipitate in going to war for that object ; because I believe, if you had avoided your declaration of war, and avoided going to war when you did—if you had postponed going to war as long as the near neighbours of Russia, who were more interested in this war than we are—I mean Austria and Prussia—we should have got all you aimed at without having shed a drop of our blood. Why, if you take the map of Europe—and I wish I had one of these gigantic skeleton maps to hang up before you—and look at the countries that border that gigantic empire of Russia, you will see, from the Baltic to the Black Sea, lying athwart that great empire and between the Czar and us, Austria and Prussia, and the whole Germanic confederation, who in six weeks can call out a million of bayonets. I only mean to argue that those countries, being the next neighbours to Russia, will, if Russia menaces the liberties or the territories of Europe, be the first to suffer ; but I doubt, I say, whether you have not been precipitate in having departed from the ground which you occupied in common with Austria and Prussia in being the first to commence war with Russia, leaving Austria and Prussia at peace. I repeat it, my firm con-

viction is, that if you had continued to occupy common ground with those countries, they are more concerned than you are in keeping Russia back, because their territory must be the first to be taken; and I believe Austria and Prussia and the whole of Germany will be as resolute as you are in the end to prevent her from encroaching on them; and you might have saved all that blood and treasure which, I am afraid, we are about to shed. With regard to the justice of this war, my friends here, some of them, have taken up the ground that I have been opposed to the war in the belief that it is not a just war. As between Russia and Turkey, I have again and again stated in the House of Commons, and my friend Mr Bright has stated the same thing most emphatically, that as between the Russian Government and the Turkish Government, there is no doubt that Turkey has the right on its side—that the Russian Government was the first to invade the territories of the Sultan, and therefore, if Turkey liked she had a *casus belli* for going to war with Russia. But the reserve I always make is this, that Russia's making an attack upon Turkey is not at present an attack upon us, and though we have a right, if we please, to mix in that quarrel and take sides with Turkey, yet I don't see that we are at all times called upon to go to war merely in defence of right, because if so—I say upon principle—it involves the principle of necessity, that we are bound to go to war wherever there is a quarrel at all, and we are to take that side which we believe to be right. Well, gentlemen, I come then to this conclusion, that you don't adopt the principle that we are to go to war in all cases where injustice is done to another country. That would be a very hazardous doctrine indeed, and it would burden you with immense

responsibilities, which I very much doubt, great as the resources of this country are, we should not be able to meet. But in the case of Turkey, there is another consideration which I have always given to it, and which I predict, in less than two years, will occupy more the attention of this country. I have visited Turkey many years ago, and seen something of that country, and I have considered this particularly, that you have to deal with a Government in Turkey which does not represent the majority of the people in the country. Strange as it may appear to the democratic opinion of many of the gentlemen present, we have in Turkey a population of 12,000,000, of which 8,000,000 are Christians, and only 4,000,000 Turks. Now, the Turks or Mahometans have been the dominant race, as they have governed the Christians, who have been deprived of all right, and even of the benefit of the law; because, at the outset of this war, no Christian was allowed to give evidence in a court of law against a Turk, and a Turk might commit any barbarity on a Christian, and if there was no Mahometan witness against him, he could not be punished for it. And if you could poll the whole population of Turkey, by universal suffrage, you would find a vast majority at this moment who would vote against you and this war, and vote in favour of the Emperor of Russia. I say there is no doubt about that at all, because, what is the constant complaint we hear, what is the complaint we universally hear, but that the Greek Christians are opposed to us—that we have had to remove the Greeks from Balaklava because they were hostile to the English? and the Greeks in England have manifested such hostility to the course which this country has taken, that they have been warned

to be more careful in the expression of sympathy with Russia. I only want you to deal with this as a fact, and an element in the consideration of this cause, because we shall hear of this for many years to come—and I wish you to bear in mind this as a most important element in the consideration of the question—that you are dealing with a very different Government from that of all other civilised Governments in existence; that the Government represents only a small minority of the people; that you have a Christian population, and a large majority, in Turkey, who are opposed to you in this matter; and that it is from that opposition you are trammelled and impeded in your operations in the war, because you get no assistance from the population. Even in the case of the Crimea, where there are a great number of Christian residents, you get no information from them, and they are the only intelligent people in the East; and hence it arises that your generals in command there positively hardly know the names of the generals who are opposed to them, or the number of troops they have to contend against. These are very important difficulties, because if you had to deal with an ordinary state of things, and with a country whose Government and people were homogeneous and united, you would have only to drive back Russia, and then the country would have only to be left to carry on its affairs in peace and quietness. But you cannot deal thus with Turkey, because when you have driven back Russia, as you propose, then comes up the question of the internal divisions of Turkey. And what is the view that is taken by Government in reference to that contingency? It is just this—that instead of Russia interfering to protect the Christian subjects of Turkey, the five

great Powers shall be invested with that right, and carry on that function. No doubt in this war the Emperor of Russia has had sinister objects, and has wished to serve his own purposes; though, at the same time, I am not sure that by-and-by there may not be another party who will have similar objects, and before this partnership is dissolved, I am afraid you may find some others who may want to have some beneficial interest in the matter; but though no doubt Russia has for her own selfish interests been interfering in the internal affairs of Turkey, yet, by your adopting the same principle that she has done, you will go very far to justify the course she has been pursuing. And mind, I don't much like the position we have occupied, for another reason—we deal only with Governments, and we never look to the people. We don't allow interference with a country where the object is to benefit the majority of the population against their Government, however bad it may be; we interfere to prevent that; but where you have interference on the part of any Government to prop up a bad Government anywhere else, as in the case of the Government of Rome, or as in the case of the Government of Hungary, where Russia goes to try to put down the people, and not to raise the people against the Government, there we do not interfere; but where it is a question of aiding a people against their Government, we instantly take sides with the Government as against the people. There may be policy in all this, but I really think it tends very much to withdraw the question from the category of justice, which some of my friends dwell upon. I think there is a great deal to be said on both sides with regard to this question of Turkey. You are going to do the same thing yourselves which

you are fighting against Russia for doing. Now, gentlemen, with regard to the conduct of this war. Our friends here, no doubt, in dealing with this question, will touch upon the subject of the conduct of this war. As to how the war has been carried on, I think there will be no difference of opinion about that. All parties will agree that a more wretched exposure of our system of administration in military and naval affairs, and a more clear illustration of the total break-down of the aristocratic routine system of administration, when it is brought to any strain or stress, could not have been given than what we have all witnessed in the conduct of this war. Now we have the admission of a member of the Government in the House of Commons that a great mistake has been made in sending out our army to the Crimea to take Sebastopol; and I heard a Minister of the Crown say, in a most jaunty way, that all parties had been mistaken—that the generals were mistaken, and that the Government had been mistaken, in their estimate of the strength of Sebastopol. But a mistake to be made by Government in an affair of that tremendous magnitude! Why, I have heard it uttered with as much *nonchalance* as though it had been a speculation at hazard, involving only a shilling or a couple of shillings. But a mistake to be made by the Government in sending an army against Sebastopol, is a mistake involving a homicide of tens of thousands of men! Why was there any mistake? Why was not all the information obtained that could be got with respect to the actual condition and strength of Sebastopol? I will undertake to say that a shrewd Leeds man, armed with £10,000, and sent to Constantinople, would have found the means of getting information

of every kind about Sebastopol. He might have got the name of every man on the muster-roll, and a drawing of the whole place, and every information could have been got if the proper precautions had been taken to get it. But the idea of sending an army, making a leap in the dark, and then coming down and telling us it was a mistake! Now, gentlemen, I am of opinion that the mistake was not merely in estimating the strength of Sebastopol. I think it was a mistake to go to Sebastopol at all, under any circumstances. You have gone 3000 miles to attack an empire containing 60,000,000 of people, possessing an army of 600,000 or 700,000 men, and you have sent in the first instance 20,000 or 30,000 men; and I must say, I think you will now all agree with me that the fulsome self-glorification with which some of the organs of the press talked of that expedition, as though it were going actually to annihilate the Russian Empire, must be a matter rather to be looked back upon as frivolous and childish. Now, gentlemen, my opinion is that the expedition to Sebastopol was a mistake. It is acknowledged to be a mistake so far that it was a leap in the dark; and I think the practical question for Englishmen to deal with now is how you are best to get out of this mistake. Well, gentlemen, if you are going to fight it out there, then I say the course hitherto taken by our Government is wholly inadequate to the object you have in view. You must raise enormous armies, you must find an immense amount of treasure, and you must carry on the war in the Crimea on a very different scale from what you have hitherto done. Now, I think there is another way by which our brave men may be removed from that position in which they have been

placed by a mistake; and I think that, without consulting your own passions, without looking too much to exaggerated hopes and expectations, we are bound in all fairness to consider the position of those brave men. We are bound, I think, if we can help it, to throw no obstacles in the way of anything that can be done to restore peace to this country, and to restore those men to their homes; and I say, I would treat those brave men, when brought from Sebastopol, with all the consideration and honour as if they had succeeded in the object they went to accomplish. Because you may depend upon it they have suffered ten times as much in the abortive effort to besiege that place as they would have done if they had succeeded by a kind of *coup de main* in taking it. Now, is there no reason to suppose there is a possibility of effecting a safe and honourable peace? Is there no ground to suppose that at the present moment the Governments of Europe have approximated to that state of things in their negotiations in which it may be possible to effect terms of honourable peace? And here I would address my friends behind me, who are proposing, I believe, on this occasion, to submit a resolution to this meeting asking for a vigorous prosecution of the war. Well, I have told you frankly, that if the war is to be carried on, it must be carried on in a very different spirit, and on a very different scale, to what it has been; but I put it to my friends around me, and I put it to you—to so important a community as this—whether you may not be throwing an obstacle in the path of peace, whether you may not be frustrating the objects the Government have now in view, to effect a peace, by passing, in the midst of such an important constituency, such a


resolution as that? My own impression is—drawn from public sources of information open to us all—that there are efforts making which are not unlikely to prove successful, if not thwarted by public opinion in this country. Efforts may be made to effect an honourable peace, and I ask my friends around me to reflect before you say or do one single thing to impede the progress of those negotiations. Our troops in the Crimea are suffering at this moment unheard-of miseries. I blame the Government, the administration of the army, for the sufferings of that army. They have sent out our brave men, the picked men of this country, and they have hurried them to the shore of an unknown land, where they did not know the force they were to be opposed to, and they have literally shot them on shore with no further provision for their subsistence than if they had been so many criminals and convicts in this country, whom you wished to get rid of as soon as possible. Are you aware, gentlemen, of what the extent of the mortality and sickness of our army has been? I had a letter last week from an officer of rank in the Crimea, in reference to the condition of the 46th Regiment, with which you are somewhat familiar in Leeds, and he says,—‘Our sick still continue to be of frightful amount. The following is a reliable statement of the present condition of the 46th Regiment, of which I told you something in my last :—“They landed on the 10th November 706 strong; they found a detachment of 101 already in the country, and they received a draft since of 34; in all, 841. They are now short of 300 effective men.” The officer who gave me these details attributes this state of things to overwork, continued wet, and insufficient food. Now, this 46th Regiment, that has dwindled in a few

weeks from 800 men to 300, has never been in the face of the enemy; it has been rotting in the trenches, where the men have been literally upon all-fours for several hours in the mud, where they have been exposed to the rain, and wind, and snow, and after this duty they are obliged to continue without shelter, and for weeks together without a dry rag upon them; and I ask you whether it is not a consideration we are bound to take into account when we are sitting comfortably at home by our own firesides, and talk about carrying on this war with vigour, when there is a possibility—a probability, I believe—of effecting an honourable peace? What is it that is proposed by carrying on the war further than you have now arrived at? I have stated in the House of Commons, and I repeat it here: suppose you take Sebastopol—as Lord John Russell has told us, the allies have no intention to occupy permanently any part of Russia, no intention to take any portion of territory from Russia; but what they want to do is, I believe, to destroy Sebastopol, as a point of honour—to be able to say, ‘We did it,’ and then to leave it. Then having done it, and left it, I said in the House of Commons, and I repeat it here, in less than ten years Russia will have come to Baring Brothers, in London for a loan, and built up Sebastopol with more perfect scientific skill than ever. Well, gentlemen, have you considered what the consequence will be, and what the process will be, of destroying this strong place? You enter the town of Sebastopol, storming it street by street, and house to house; but you are aware, of course, that it involves a loss of some ten thousand of the allied troops; and is it not our bounden duty, I say—does it not come to us as Christian Englishmen to ask

whether this enormous sacrifice of valuable lives is for any object worth the sacrifice? I say again, and have said it before, though it is dissented from by many here, when the excitement was got up in favour of this war, there was an impression that it would end in diminishing the territorial authority of Russia. I say, it was thought you were going to lessen the power of Russia by emancipating some of its people, and you have now heard it from a minister of the Crown that there is no intention whatever of reducing the power and territory of Russia. What, then, have you to gain by continuing this war, provided you can obtain the terms of an honourable peace? I may be told that this is a war in which justice and great principles of right are at stake; but I say, as an abstract principle of right and justice, we are not bound to go and fight the battles of anybody; and I say this is a measure taken for our own defence, and not any other. We are not fighting because we think the Mahometan population are deserving of this sacrifice of our lives, but, I presume, because we believe that if Russia succeeds in encroaching on Turkey, she may eventually and remotely come and molest us. Just so; that is the view I have always taken of it. I like to take that view of it, because that is the only really justifiable and political view of the case. But we have gentlemen who tell us that this is a great question of justice; that we are judges, and that we are exercising a great act of justice in punishing a great criminal. Now, will you be kind enough to hear an opinion with regard to ourselves—I am an Englishman like the rest of you—will you be kind and good-tempered enough to hear what I have to say about your being the judge and Russia the criminal? You will probably hear all


sorts of opinions, and you will probably be told of Russia having successively taken territory from neighbouring countries. Well, I will say it, as an Englishman myself, whilst I blush for myself, that for every square mile of territory Russia has taken from somebody else by force of arms during the last 150 years, we have taken five. Now, I am glad to see you bear it with such good humour, because I need not be afraid in England to speak the truth. We shall have got on very far towards despotism in this country, when a man won't be listened to that does speak the conscientious truth. But we are told, moreover, that Russia has been encroaching latterly upon the Turkish empire—that is, that the present Czar has had a very strong disposition to meddle with what is not his own. Now, it is a singular fact, but it is a fact notwithstanding, that during this Czar's lifetime he has not taken a slice of territory from Turkey, but one of the parties engaged in this war for the assertion of justice in the case of the Russian encroachments has taken a very large slice of the Turkish empire; because we all know that, in 1830, France went and seized upon Algiers, and has been taking the adjacent territory ever since, and that was a dependency of Turkey. And more, I believe that up to this moment England has never acknowledged the right of France to send consuls there, because we did not wish to offend Turkey by recognising the spoliation of that country. Now, I know what my friend Mr Baines, who is one of the best debaters I know, and is coming after me, is going to say. He will say, it is all very well, Mr Cobden, you talking in that way, but two blacks don't make one white. Well, but let me remind Mr Baines that what he tells you is this, that we are the judges and that the Czar is the criminal;

and that we are doing justice in the interests of all Europe and the civilised world. Now, I think before we mount the judgment-seat it is necessary we should have clean hands. I don't think, where a judge is known to be himself given to pilfering as much as the man in the dock, he is very likely to be sustained on the judgment-seat by public opinion, or that he is likely to be allowed to exercise the functions of a judge for one day after that fact is discovered. That is just the case, that is the predicament in which we find ourselves when we come to this argument of justice. We are taking a position that the world does not recognise in us. I must ask you again to bear in mind that within the last 150 years we have taken from a Mahomedan sovereign, the Great Mogul, territory containing 150 millions of people—nearly twice as many as the whole Russian empire, and when you remember what we have done with the Dutch at the Cape, and what we have done with everybody else somewhere or other—when other countries remember that, they don't view us in the same light we do ourselves—that we are the disinterested, just, and perfect and immaculate people that we allege of ourselves. They believe we are just another Russia in that respect. We have taken territory wherever we could get it; and what is the consequence? I come now to the logical deduction from this—that we find that not only does not Russia acknowledge our authority as a judge, but that the rest of the world does not acknowledge it. That is our anomalous position. We are islanders (now do hear me with good humour again), with an immense amount of insular pride, vanity and conceit—here we are with all these qualities setting ourselves up as judges in this case to do justice to a criminal, and the countries




on the continent, and the people of America believe it is a mere struggle of ambition for territorial power, and that we are afraid of something happening to our trade in the Black Sea, or to our connection with India. I don't say they are right, but they don't give us credit for the pure abstract justice and disinterestedness that we lay claim to. But in this case what is the criminal himself? Does he stand in such a position as the helpless man in the dock, who has been arrested for thieving, who is guarded by a couple of police officers, and in whose recapture, were he to attempt to escape, not only the whole audience in the court, but the whole public out of doors, would eagerly join? No, our position with regard to him is like that of a judge who has to descend from the bench and fight his own battle with the criminal arraigned before him, who might not only dust the judge's wig, and shake the powder out of it, but might bid fair to gain the mastery over him. Now, that is our position with regard to Russia. Russia does not admit that we are the judge in this case, and does not submit to our authority. You see what a resistance she is offering to our interference; and I must say that the tone and spirit which we have manifested in carrying on the war is not of that calm, impartial and placid description which one would expect to find in a judge sitting on the bench, and having confidence in his own authority. We have used a good many strong terms; we have shown a good deal of passion in this matter, and I ask you to consider this question apart from all those high-flown pretensions which I believe to have no foundation at all in reality, and which the world certainly does not recognise. Take, for instance, the states of the continent. You would suppose that the King of

Belgium would lean to the side of England, and would be as willing as anyone to pronounce an opinion with respect to this quarrel. Does he, in addressing his parliament, say that England is exercising the functions of a judge, and call upon them to support us by the public opinion of that country? No; he tells his Parliament that a great war exists between three of the principal Powers of Europe, and that they must preserve a strict neutrality. What says the representative of the people of the United States? He says, with reference to this war, that it is the duty and the interest of the American Government to observe a strict neutrality. Sweden and Denmark express similar views; and Switzerland, where surely there would be something like sympathy for freedom, declares this a war in which she will maintain a strict neutrality. What says Germany, Prussia and Austria? They, too, say that this is a war in which they are bound to maintain a strict neutrality. You want to enlist troops abroad to recruit your armies, and to pay them out of your taxes for fighting your battles. Well, do the foreign Governments grant passports to such recruits, to facilitate their passage to this country? No, everywhere they throw obstacles in your way, and they will not grant passports to their subjects who may desire to enlist in your service. Now, I ask, in the face of these facts, whether anybody will get up, here or elsewhere, and pretend that we have a right to assume in this case the position of an immaculate judge dealing with a guilty criminal? I have said that we are bound to consider the condition of our brave troops. I confess my heart yearns for our gallant soldiers who are in the Crimea at this moment. When I read the daily accounts of their condition I cannot sleep at



nights for thinking of them. I consider that their case commends itself to our sympathy. If there is no paramount object to be gained, and if the Government can obtain a fair and honourable peace, by encouraging them to continue this war you will incur deep responsibility, and I am satisfied that in less than twelve months you will look back with regret upon the vote you are about to give. Will you again be good humoured enough to let me remind you of what has happened on former occasions? You know that I am considered a very impracticable man because I have refused to join in this and in former cries. Now, some two or three years back there was a cry about a French invasion, and I was unpopular because I resisted that cry, and said that the Emperor of the French was not a brigand who would some night land on the coast of Sussex. I was then treated as the Utopian disciple or champion of peace; and if you want to know what was said of me, turn to the caricatures of the day, where you will find me represented as decorated with very long ears—looking into a cannon's mouth, and crying 'Peace, peace!' Well, does anybody now think it necessary to call out the militia to protect our shores against an invasion from France? Remember the arguments then used were, that the Emperor believed he had a destiny which he could not control, and that, considering it his destiny to avenge Waterloo, he intended to invade this country. Grave statesmen argued that France might send over 60,000 men from Cherbourg in a single night, and the militia were called out. Will any person now acknowledge that they placed faith in those apprehensions? Nobody will pretend to say, I think, that I was wrong on that occasion. Again, some years ago a vote was taken in the House of

Commons as to whether we should go to war with the little kingdom of Greece, because an individual named Don Pacifico, who said he was an Englishman, laid claim to a debt of some £26,000 or £27,000 from the Greek Government, and the English Government insisted upon compliance with the demand. The vote of the House of Commons amounted to a vote of confidence in the Government, but I refused to vote in support of the claim, because I had reason to know that the whole affair was very little better than a swindle. That political crisis happened to occur when the great wool sales in London were in progress; great numbers of Yorkshiremen were in London at the time, and they sent me requisitions and 'round robins' urging me, as I valued my popularity, to vote in favour of the British Government and adversely to Greece. I voted against the British Government. France and Russia eventually interfered, and compelled the English Government to refer the subject to arbitration. The arbitrators consisted of diplomatists, including our own minister; they met at Lisbon, and decided that Don Pacifico's claim to £26,000 was utterly groundless, but they advised that £150 should be given him as an act of charity. Now, we never hear of these things afterwards. I was denounced for my conduct on that occasion, and lost the favour of many good men. I drove one man, on the borders of Lancashire, mad on the subject. I was very popular with him before, but the revulsion was too much for him, and he nearly lost his senses. I received letters from him at the time that pained me exceedingly. I will ask my friend Mr Baines, and the party of which he is so eminent a leader, and I will ask you also, whether you are about to put yourselves in a position on




which you will be able to look back with perfect satisfaction two years hence? You are calling on the Government to carry on the war with vigour till you can obtain an honourable peace. Now at this moment terms of peace are, I believe, being arranged, and it is within the range of possibility that you might this night hear by electric telegraph that something is arranged regarding those propositions for peace. Then, would it not be a pity to find this industrious population of Leeds advocating a more warlike policy than the diplomatists of Vienna or London and that they should record such an opinion as will one day or other be urged against them? I hope my friend Mr Baines, in discussing this question, will not dwell on the personal character for ambition of the present Czar of Russia. I know that this has been made very much a personal question; but I think that so far as the Government is concerned they have no right, at all events, to deal with this as a personal question against the Czar, for I will read a short extract or two to show the amount of fulsome panegyric which has been penned respecting the Czar by members of the present Government. You have all read of the secret correspondence with the Czar. Now, I know that in America the publication of that correspondence created a revulsion of feeling not against Russia, but against ourselves, for it was found that our Government were treating the Czar as the most honourable, estimable personage on the face of the earth, and, in fact, were giving him credit for qualities the very opposite of those which are now alleged as the ground of war. A line or two will bear out my statement. When the secret conference was going on at St Petersburg, between Sir H. Seymour and the Czar, Lord J. Russell was Foreign

Minister for a few months, and knowing, as he did, the proposition made by the Czar about 'the sick man,' he thus wrote to Sir H. Seymour:—'Upon the whole, her Majesty's Government are persuaded that no course of policy can be adopted more wise, more disinterested, more beneficial to Europe, than that which his Imperial Majesty has so long followed, and which will render his name more illustrious than that of the most famous sovereigns who have sought immortality by unprovoked conquest and ephemeral glory.' That is the way Lord J. Russell spoke of the Czar on the 9th of February 1853, less than two years ago, after the secret and clandestine proposition made to Sir H. Seymour as to whether we should like to go shares for the goods of 'the sick man.' But there is another Foreign Minister who more than endorsed this opinion. Lord Clarendon followed Lord John Russell, and how does he speak after he knows of this proposition of the Czar, who is now looked upon as the very incarnation and embodiment of everything wicked? He says,— 'The generous confidence exhibited by the Emperor'—that is, the generous confidence with which he whispered, 'the Sultan is going to die, will you go shares with me?'—'the generous confidence exhibited by the Emperor entitles his Imperial Majesty to the most cordial declaration of opinion on the part of her Majesty's Government, who are fully aware that in the event of any understanding with reference to future contingencies being expedient, or, indeed, possible, the word of his Imperial Majesty would be preferable to any convention that could be framed.' That is your opinion of the Czar as expressed by your Foreign Minister less than two years ago—mind, after the suppression of the Polish Revolution, with all its horrors, in 1830—

after the suppression of the nationality of Cracow, and after the invasion of Hungary—after all these things, and after the Emperor has been nearly thirty years on the throne, this is the way he is spoken of by our Foreign Minister. Now what revolts me is the subsequent conduct of these men, and that of Lord John Russell in particular, who has made speeches greatly calculated to rouse the war spirit in this country—what I say has revolted me is the spirit of personal hostility they have shown, while they themselves have been found in secret conclave—when they never expected that these things would be brought to light—using such fulsome language towards that very individual. I do not stand here for the Czar, because there can hardly be conceived two men on the face of the earth who can so little sympathise with each other. I regard him as a man of towering intellectual capacity, but the very incarnation of physical force. Someone says, ‘keep him back!’ That brings me again to the question, how will you keep back a Power like that? I am afraid the very course you have taken in going to Sebastopol will have the effect which I will deeply regret, of raising the *prestige* of the power of Russia in the eyes of all barbarous countries. It will be said, notwithstanding the Alma and Inkermann, that England and France came to invade Russia, but that she was more than a match for them both. This arises from the mistake of having gone there at all. If you want to fight a nation or an individual, do not go where you give them tenfold advantage; rather go where you will meet them on equal terms. I won’t speak of Russia on my own authority. The language I have always held is, that for purposes of aggression Russia is weak because she is poor; but for the purpose of de-

fence look at the Napoleon example. He entered Moscow on the 14th of September 1812. You embarked for the Crimea on the 14th of September 1854; and the mistake in both cases consisted in going to seek the enemy among his own impregnable fastnesses. Here is the opinion given by Lord Palmerston on this subject :—‘ There never has been a great State whose power for external aggression has been more overrated than Russia. She may be impregnable within her own boundaries, but she is nearly powerless for all purposes of offence.’ Now, I hope my dear friend Mr Baines will not try to frighten us by telling us what Russia is going to do, provided we let him take possession of Turkey. I don’t think it would be so easy a thing to take possession of Turkey—so difficult does Russia find it to move from home at all. Now, I know my friend’s argument exactly. He is going to say that if you allow Russia to take Turkey then she will become so powerful, having possession of such rich territories, that she will next come and take other neighbouring countries, and take possession of England also. That is the argument by which we were recommended to go to war with Russia. Now Turkey is a country that has been most barbarously misgoverned for the last 400 years, and it has been brought to a state that I cannot describe better than in the words of Lord Carlisle, your late worthy representative, who has just been in Turkey. He says :—‘ But when you leave the partial splendours of the capital and the great State establishments, what is it you find over the broad surface of a land which nature and climate have favoured beyond all others, once the home of all art and all civilisation? Look yourself—ask those who live there; deserted villages, uncultivated plains, banditti-haunted moun-



tains, torpid laws, a corrupt administration, a disappearing people.' With respect to Russia taking possession of neighbouring countries, I should like to know how long it will be before that power could construct the roads and bridges necessary to enable it to cross the morasses and deserts that lie between it and the nations of Western Europe. It takes about seven years to restore a farm to fertility that has been left neglected ; and I believe it would take a century at least to enable Russia to make any progress in such a direction as we are told it is likely to take. At all events, I certainly do not like to continue this horrid war, to avert dangers that are not greater than the war itself. We have got the war now. It has carried desolation into your homes, from the palace to the cottage, and could you have had much worse if all that my friend may state could possibly happen? Seeing, then, that there is a prospect of peace, all I ask you to do is not to commit yourselves to the passing of any resolutions whatever. I thank you for your kindness in having so long listened to me on this occasion, especially as I know many of you are adverse to the opinions I have expressed. I am surrounded by men of all political parties, and I was led to expect great discord, but I never believed that among Yorkshiremen I should not have full freedom to express my honest convictions. I felt that all they would look for from their representative was that he should be truthful and sincere in his statements, and that so long as he was so they would not grudge him the time he had occupied in stating his opinions.

L I.

MR COBDEN TO MRS SCHWABE.

MIDHURST, 7 Oct. 1855.

MY DEAR MRS SCHWABE,—

There seems to have been a very impudent hoax played off on the public by the use of the electric telegraph at Vienna. After all, Sebastopol has not yet fallen, and although I doubt not that *that* will be the result, yet it will not be brought about without a very great slaughter on both sides. Before Christmas, most of our families of rank will be in mourning for their relations who have fallen in the Crimea, and very few of one army will return in good health to their native shores. There is a poor woman in Midhurst who has *three* sons in the Crimea. The anxiety to know the names of those who have fallen must be intense throughout the country. I have been shocked at the bold assumption we have made that God is fighting for us, because we had, *as we thought*, obtained a victory. Now I am afraid that if the Russians were to succeed, with the aid of the winter, in driving us out of the Crimea, we should be presumptuous enough to deny to *them* the plea of Divine assistance which we claim for ourselves. And what is this but making Heaven a partial and unjust arbiter in this world's affairs? For if we lay down the principle that God gives the victory to us *because* our cause is a *just* one, is it not blasphemous to assume that He would allow *injustice* to triumph in the persons of our enemies?

Yet in what an absurdity does this involve us! for it identifies the Almighty with all the successful battles ever fought, whilst *we know* in the great majority of cases they have been the triumph of brute force over reason, right and justice. Depend on it we are wrong in invoking the sanction of Heaven upon the slaughterings and maimings we are perpetrating in the Crimea. *We* cannot say it is a defensive war, since it is carried on three thousand miles from our own shores, and upon the soil of Russia. Nobody has pretended that Russia ever sought to attack *us* or to quarrel with *us*. On the contrary, she sought to make us an accomplice in her designs upon Turkey. But we justify ourselves with the plea that we are fighting the battle of the weak against the strong. Why, what pharisees and hypocrites are we to set up ourselves as better than Russia or other nations! We are shocked and impelled to deeds of retributive slaughter against Russia for attempting to encroach upon the integrity and independence of Turkey, *we* who have despoiled Mahometan Governments of more territory than all the world beside!! And do we presume to charge ourselves with the duty of enforcing the laws of justice between nation and nation, whilst we have the *Great Mogul* shut up in Delhi, and are the conquering masters of all India? And do we dare to claim for ourselves the character of God's minister of justice when we have not yet learnt how to act justly towards other nations? It is not by the success of a battle that we are to deduce the approbation of Heaven. We are oftener punished by success than failure in this life. It is by the *remote consequences* of our actions that God administers chastisement upon us for our successful sins. And even if we are victorious in the Crimea

I foresee nothing but evil to our best interests as a nation as the permanent results of this war. But I must apologise for this long sermon, the only one I fear which has been preached against the war.

R. COBDEN.

L I I.

EXTRACT from a Letter from Mr X. to Mrs
SCHWABE. *October 18th, 1855.*

I shall be anxious to see Mr Cobden's pamphlet, but he will make no converts to his peace principles except of those whose commercial minds think more of the present and number one than of the civilisation and happiness of mankind. I believe Russia and her influence to be antagonistic to the liberty and progress of the human race, and in the present struggle, therefore, I feel that we are doing the work of God, and no fine-drawn reasoning, like Mr Gladstone's, nor even Mr Cobden's miscalled Manchester logic, can shake my inward conviction that our cause is a noble one.



L I I I.

Mr COBDEN to Mrs SCHWABE.

MIDHURST, 31 *October* 1855.

MY DEAR MRS SCHWABE,—Pray excuse me for not having sent back the enclosed* sooner. Our friend X. has the great majority of the public on his side in his support of the war. But that has been the case with every war in this country, for they have all been popular at the beginning. X. knows how much a few good men were persecuted in Manchester in 1792-3, because they declared their opposition to the great French War of the Revolution. Mr Robert Philips of the Park and Mr Walker were mobbed because they did not think that it was a 'just and necessary war.' I have seen an old man in Manchester who remembered the breaking out of the American War of Independence in 1776, and he told me he witnessed a procession in Market Street, in which the clergy of the Old Church marched in full canonicals before the *recruiting sergeant* and his party. That was then said to be a just and necessary war, but nobody says so now. It is very consolatory to one's self-love to take up the ground so complacently occupied by our good friend, when he says we are 'doing the work of God.' But he should recollect that both sides in every war that ever cursed the earth have always claimed God for an ally. Are not the

* Extract from Mr X.'s letter prefixed.

Russians now offering prayers and thanksgiving in their churches as much as ourselves? It shames me, who have been a little behind the political scenes, and know from what mean and unworthy motives public men, even in affairs of peace and war, often act, to see God's name taken in connection with our military operations. It is one of the good traits of Wellington's life that he never profanes the name of the Deity by making Him a party to his victories. I believe if an honest, hard-headed and hard-hearted old man had confessed his sincere faith in such matters he would have told us that he believed the Deity had much more to do with both sides of all our wars than the Almighty. I observe that you are under the impression that I am writing a pamphlet. It is not so. I thought of addressing a letter to your friend Baines of the *Leeds Mercury*, upon the subject of recruiting for the army, showing that only poor, thoughtless boys have enlisted. If you publish the letter you will be surprised to find that, with all our swagger, we have been making a lamentable figure in action, and that, in fact, the *men* of England have, as a rule, very carefully abstained from risking their own persons in 'doing God's work.'

R. COBDEN

L I V.

LETTER from Mr COBDEN to the Editor of the
Leeds Mercury, on the ARMY IN THE CRIMEA.
31st October 1855.

MY DEAR SIR,—I beg to invite your attention and that of the public to some considerations of grave moment relative to the state of our army, as connected with the policy of the present war.

The people of England can never have been aware of the state in which our army has been left, from the first moment of its landing in the Crimea, owing to the insufficient number and defective quality of its reinforcements. Had the people been, as they ought to have been, frankly and honestly dealt by in this respect, they would in their own persons—if the war has been as popular as has been alleged—have long ago supplied the deficiency. I am bound also to assume that that large portion of the newspaper press of this country which has advocated the landing of our forces in Russia must have been equally uninformed of this vital defalcation; otherwise, while vaunting of the unanimous support which the people were tendering to the Government, it would not have concealed from them the greatest and most urgent of all wants—men—and thus have prepared for us the ignominious dilemma to which boastful professions and abortive performances have, I fear, consigned us. For the Government alone no plea of ignorance can be put forth; they have known all, and the fact of

their holding office invests them with entire and exclusive responsibility.

What are the facts, so far as we have been allowed to glean them, up to the close of the inquiry before Mr Roebuck's committee. The following statistics I have derived from the appendix to their report. It appears that the number of British troops, officers and men of all arms, who landed in the Crimea before the battle of the Alma was 26,800. At that engagement the English outnumbered their French allies. On the death of Marshal St. Arnaud, and after the flank movement upon Balaklava, Lord Raglan became the senior commander, and, in apportioning the ground for siege operations, took upon himself the same extent of work as was assigned to General Canrobert's army. From this moment, according to the evidence of the highest military authorities before the committee, our army began to sink under the effects of overwork. Then came the battle of Inkermann (brought upon us by our exposed situation, owing to the smallness of the force in proportion to our extended lines), which was followed by the still more deadly trench work, exposure and privations of the winter; and the following is the horrible result in the monthly report of the sick and wounded of all arms in Lord Raglan's army :—

1854—October, .	11,988	sick and wounded
„ November, .	16,846	„
„ December, .	19,479	„
1855—January, .	23,076	„

(January is the last month for which we have a complete return.)

Notwithstanding the reinforcements which had

arrived from home, and from our garrisons and colonies abroad, our army was reduced at one time to less than 12,000 effective bayonets.

That much of this sickness and its attendant mortality arose from the insufficient number of men sent to reinforce our army, is conclusively proved in the evidence before the Sebastopol Committee. General Evans and the Duke of Cambridge speak most emphatically to this effect. According to the evidence of the latter, 'it does not admit of a doubt,' that if 8000 or 10,000 men had been sent in the course of a few weeks, instead of the 'driblets' which arrived, a great portion of the sickness arising from overwork might have been prevented; and the Duke of Newcastle, while confessing his inability to find men, stated that 'the overwork arose from the extent of the lines which had been originally undertaken by the English army being too great for the reduced numbers.' Now, it was only from the ranks of the people at home that the vast chasms created by death and disease in our army could be filled up; and I wish to call your particular attention to the rate at which at this very time enlistment was going on. The following is the number of recruits finally approved for cavalry, infantry, and artillery:—

	Total in each month.
1854—October,	2091
„ November,	5374
„ December	6600
1855—January,	6553
„ February,	4073
„ March,	4514

(These are our latest official returns.)

It will be seen by a comparison that while our

sick and wounded, exclusive of killed, averaged for the four months, October, November, December and January, nearly 18,000 a month, the recruiting was going on at the rate of only 5100 a month. It was admitted by Lord John Russell in the House last December, that the recruits fell short by 20,000 of the number voted by Parliament; and in the session of the present year an independent member of Parliament asserted in the presence of Ministers, without contradiction, that the deficiency amounted to 40,000. And during all this time, when our army was wasting away from want of that succour which the Government could not send, 'owing'—to quote the evidence of the Duke of Newcastle—'to the unwillingness of men to enlist to the extent to which the House of Commons had increased the English army'—during all this time (I say it only as a warning for the future) our war journals and orators were assuring us that the people were far more eager for the war than the Government or Parliament

I have said that the reinforcements sent to the Crimea were defective in quality, as well as insufficient in number; and upon this subject the testimony of the Commander-in-Chief before the Sebastopol Committee, which I shall give without any comments of my own, are quite conclusive. Lord Hardinge says:—

'We made our men pretty perfect in drill in the course of sixty days, and when we had to send them out, instead of being composed of bone and muscle, they were almost gristle; in fact, they were too young. . . .'

'But when we came to send in October, November and December, to pass the winter in the Crimea, our raw recruits—and we had no others—it was impossible to expect that they could stand

the inclemency of the climate, and the hard work in the trenches, in the same manner as a similar number of soldiers would have done in 1808. . . .'

'Give us a good stout man, and let us have him for sixty days to train him, and he will be as good a soldier as you can have. . . .'

'They are thoughtless boys who come in, and not men of twenty-five; they are generally boys from eighteen to twenty; the numbers of that age are very large in proportion to those who are past twenty-one and twenty-two. . . .'

'The thoughtless boy enlists; the grown-up man of twenty-five will not or seldom.'

I could give extracts from the evidence of Sir De Lacy Evans, the Duke of Cambridge, and other officers from the Crimea, confirmatory of Lord Hardinge's statement; and once for all let it be observed that their testimony disposes of the plea for a larger standing army during forty years of peace. 'Give us,' says the Commander-in-Chief, 'a good stout man, and let us have him for sixty days to train him, and he will be as good a soldier as you can have.' But it is the bone and muscle of men, and not the 'gristle' of boys, that he wanted for this purpose. In the same spirit was the reply of General Evans, who, when asked by a member of the committee to explain the word 'inefficient,' which he applied to the reinforcements sent to him in the Crimea, and whether he meant that they were 'untrained,' answered,—'Nearly untrained, but that did not signify; they were too young.' These boy recruits, on their arrival in the winter season in the Crimea, served scarcely any other purpose than to encumber the hospitals. They added so little to the strength of our army that at length, after enduring unparalleled hardships and sufferings, in the vain

attempt to maintain an equality with our allies, we surrendered to them a part of our ground (that part which has been the site of the final triumph), and from that time to the present our force has been gradually assuming the character of a contingent to the French army.

The evidence before the Sebastopol Committee brings us down to May only, but, unfortunately, we are not without ocular proofs that the quality of our recruits has not since changed for the better. Any one who walks the streets of the metropolis and casts an eye at the sentries standing guard at our public buildings, or glances at a batch of recruits at drill, or who observes the group of youths with which the recruiting sergeant is busy in our villages, will need no further evidence that it is still the 'gristle,' and not the bone and muscle, of the country which is passing into the ranks of the army; and, unhappily, recent events in the Crimea have startled us into a conviction of the dangers of (to borrow from the brilliant pen of *The Times*' correspondent) 'trusting the honour, reputation and glory of Great Britain to undisciplined lads from the plough or the lanes of our towns and villages;' for it is well known, and ought, in justice to the officers, to be publicly acknowledged, that in the late unsuccessful attack on the Redan the men became massed in inextricable confusion, not from any lack of individual courage, but owing to an absence of the coolness, nerve and self-possession which age, and age alone, can give.

And how is it, I would respectfully inquire, that the purport of what I have narrated should be better known and appreciated everywhere than in England, and that while, to quote the words of *The Times*—the truth of which I can confirm from recent personal experience on a restricted field of observa-

tion—'in every *café* and promenade in Europe the conversation has been of the sorry figure which England has made in the present war,' not one word of warning has been addressed to the country, or a single appeal made to the people for a supply of efficient men to fill the vacant ranks of the army, which the people, and the people alone, could fill? How is it, on the contrary, that while the most unmeasured censures have been heaped on the Parliament, Government, aristocracy and military commanders, our press, platform, and even our pulpits, have, during all this time, teemed with more fulsome laudation of the people of England than was ever before lavished on a community in the same space of time? I will not be tempted at present to pursue this inquiry; it would lead me aside from the practical question to which I beg to invite your attention, and that of other leading advocates of the continuance of the war.

How is it proposed to raise men (not boys) to fight that which I am told is the 'battle of European civilisation and liberty against a despotism which aims at nothing less than universal empire?' If this and kindred phrases which have rung in our ears for the last two years mean anything but sound and fury, Englishmen have undertaken not merely the work of one nation, but of half Europe. We cannot, if we would, depute this great self-imposed task to a legion of foreign mercenaries; for our recruiting agents abroad (I blush to say it) have everywhere been threatened or imprisoned, not only the United States, but Prussia, Switzerland, and even diminutive Hamburg, having refused to allow their citizens to engage, even at our expense, in what we insist on calling a struggle for their independence. We cannot for very shame again confide

this duty to 'thoughtless boys'; besides, even those raw recruits fall short, at the hour of our utmost need, to the extent of from 20,000 to 40,000 of the number voted by Parliament. How, then, do you propose to bring the bone, muscle and manhood of England into the field?

There are two methods, equally successful, by which regular armies are raised in foreign countries. The one is by a conscription, as in France, where a certain number of men of a prescribed age are taken every year by lot from among all classes, and where the unlucky person who draws the fatal number from the balloting urn, be he peer or peasant, must either serve himself, or find an approved substitute, at an expense varying from £80 to £200, according to circumstances. The other is the plan of the United States, where the Legislature votes the number of the army, and voluntary enlistment supplies the men;—this mode has never been found to fail. On the breaking out of the war with Mexico, five times as many men offered their services, in many parts of the Union, as were required. All ranks and professions pressed forward. The newspaper editor exchanged the pen for the sword; the lawyer threw up his brief; the doctor abandoned his patients, and the farmer his land—all to enlist into the ranks. The present President of the United States, then of mature age, and with a leading practice as a barrister, gave up family and profession, and volunteered into the ranks. The plan is, in fact, our own, with this material difference in its working, that in America the popularity of a war is proved by the willingness of the people to take part in it. There is still a third system which has been recommended for adoption in this country—that of increasing the bounty until you tempt men from other pursuits into

the army. But it is liable to the objection that in these days of cheap locomotion you would not be sure of keeping your recruit after he had pocketed the bribe. 'We find,' says Lord Hardinge, 'that the more you raise the bounty, the greater the number of desertions; they make a trade of it.'

You will not expect me to say which of these plans should be adopted for carrying on *a war which in my conscience I believe to be more unnecessary, rash and aimless than any in our history; and which, for the visionary objects avowed by its advocates, has no parallel since the Crusades.* But, unfortunately, opposition to a war by no means separates us from its consequences. The safety of the country, the prosperity of its people, the burdens we may be called upon to bear, the probable duration of hostilities, and, above all, because involving all, the effect which the policy and conduct of the war may have upon our character and honour as a nation—all these are matters of as vital importance to the opponents as the advocates of a war; and hence the right they may fairly claim to call in question not only its policy, but the mode in which it is carried on. We are told of the necessity of maintaining our prestige among the nations of the world; and there is no advocate of the war more sincerely desirous than myself of elevating the true fame and influence of England. But my complaint is that the war party, by that display of inflated pretensions and abortive performances with which they have contrived to occupy the attention of the world, have attained the very opposite end to that at which they and I have, no doubt with equal sincerity, aimed. Nations, like individuals, are judged less by what they omit to do than by the extent to which their deeds fall short of their wordy professions.

America, for instance, does not suffer in prestige by maintaining a standing army of 10,000 or 12,000 men only; and but one, if one, line-of-battle ship in commission. On the contrary, there is dignity in her attitude, when coupled with the avowed principle of non-intervention; and the strength which she thereby husband makes her one of the most formidable Powers in the world. But if America undertook to 'defend the liberties of Europe,' or 'protect the civilisation of the world,' her present armament would draw upon her universal ridicule. And I must be permitted to tell our war-at-any-price party, who talk so glibly of humbling and reducing to abject terms of peace an empire of 60,000,000 of people, by invading their territory at a distance of 3000 miles, and thus contending with the passive obstinacy of the most stubborn race in existence under the greatest possible disadvantage to ourselves — who treat with scorn the neutrality of Germany, Austria, Prussia, Sweden, Denmark, Holland and Switzerland, and assume to themselves and France the exclusive honour of—to quote the words of an esteemed friend of mine on a late occasion to his applauding constituents—'thrusting back a barbarous power which is seeking to trample out civilisation and overwhelm Europe'—I tell this party that they will bring ridicule on this great country, that they will lower our prestige, and perhaps draw upon us slights and insults, thus hazard- ing the recurrence of future wars, unless they either moderate their language to the level of their deeds, or raise their performances to an equality with their pretensions.

I shall say nothing upon a point which must have engaged the anxious consideration of thoughtful minds—namely, the effect which will be produced

on our alliance with the French people if the blood of their peasantry, with whom the war has never been very popular, should again and again have to be expended to purchase fresh triumphs for our war party.

If the avowed objects of this party are to be persevered in, we are now only at the commencement of the war. If the whole of the Crimea were in our hands to-morrow, we should still be at the beginning of the struggle. The Government of Austria must in its heart (if it have one) be rejoiced to see three Powers, not one of whom it trusts, but all of whom it fears, exhausting themselves in a destructive war at a remote distance from her frontiers. Prussia and Germany are almost to a man for neutrality—an armed one if necessary; and they who still say there is a difference between the Governments and peoples on this subject, know nothing of what has been passing lately in those countries. We shall therefore be left to complete the task which, in conjunction with our French ally, we have imposed on ourselves. Every step we take on Russian territory must be over earthworks and at the point of the bayonet, for the Russians have never fought great battles with an enemy on their own soil without the defensive aid of redoubts and intrenchments. This is the work of men, and not of the 'thoughtless boys' who are at present kidnapped by the recruiting sergeant. There is nothing for it but an appeal to the manhood of England. To this end the press and the orators and leaders of the party opposed to peace, who tell us they have all England at their back, must now address themselves. If, as we have been told, this war, in defence of the 'liberty and civilisation' of a continent which does not think it necessary to

defend itself, is the people's war, there will be a response to the appeal; if, on the contrary, it be a war of diplomatists and newspapers, it will fail.

But in the meantime, all parties, whether for peace or war, will, I am sure, agree with me that a less arrogant and bombastic tone, not only toward Russia, but Prussia and other countries, on the part of our exponents of public opinion, would be an acceptable change; or, if our able-bodied orators and writers *will* continue to declaim in favour of carrying on the war 'with vigour,' let them at least be prepared to respond, in their own persons to the invitation to take a part in it. And to our festive warriors of the tavern and dinner-table school, however exalted in rank, let me add that the hour for 'Rule Britannia' and other songs of triumph has not yet arrived. We have taken Britannia from her ocean throne, to land her on an element over which her sceptre does not 'rule,' where we have abandoned her to the somewhat unsafe keeping of 'thoughtless boys'; and if a tithe of the exploits promised in her name are to be achieved, every man of the war-at-any-price party, between twenty-one and fifty, must be prepared to rush to the rescue.

Before I conclude I would express a hope that the time is not distant when the thoughtful portion of the British public, who in the end determine our national policy, will be awakened to a sense of their responsibility. Let it be remembered that we have invaded the territory of Russia; that we are now the aggressive party; that we have not to this day defined, even to our own comprehension, the terms which would satisfy us and induce us to withdraw; and that it is hardly probable under such circumstances that acceptable proposals for peace should

come from Russia. Let it always be borne in mind that no terms of peace are possible which do not involve the withdrawal of our armies from her territory, and that no injuries, which we might in the meantime inflict on her (some of those already committed on her coast will not, I fear, redound to our credit as a civilised and commercial people), could have any permanent effects to compensate for the losses, miseries and obvious dangers to ourselves from the indefinite protraction of the war. And by whom is the prolongation of hostilities advocated? With the exception of those in office, to whom peace will bring a day of reckoning, is there a statesman of trust or authority in this country who is not in his heart in favour of peace on terms believed to be now practicable? or can there be found one commanding intellect now employed (unless under the shield of an anonymous irresponsibility) in inciting the country to a perseverance in the war? And for whose benefit are hostilities to be continued? Not for that of Turkey, for every day of their continuance diminishes the chances of her resuscitation—not for the interests of the governing classes of Europe, for they all desire peace—nor for those of the 'democracy,' whose eminent chiefs have denounced the war as an aimless waste of human blood in which they have no interest—not even for the benefit of our ally, for we know that the French Government was favourable to a pacification after the Vienna Conferences; and report says, I believe truly, that it is now again disposed for peace. What human interest, then, can possibly be served by the continuation of hostilities?

We have been told, indeed, that war, which the world had regarded as but at best an inevitable evil, is in itself a beneficent antidote to the selfishness of

a mercantile age—and that the manly virtues would become extinct, unless invigorated by the siege and battle-field. There are minds so wanting in moral continence that they abandon themselves to every popular emotion or frenzy of the hour—who, when all hearts exulted at the signs of international peace, declaimed of the horrors of war—who, now that the demon of carnage has sway for a season, sing of the ‘canker of peace,’ and who would be ready to mop and mow with madmen to-morrow if Bedlam could be but one day in the ascendant. Such are they who now ask us to believe that the spectacle of human passion and suffering, which has been enacted during the last year in the Crimea, and which has converted that fair scene into an earthly pandemonium, is necessary for the social regeneration of mankind; that the purer feelings and affections of our nature find a healthy development in an atmosphere so foul and unnatural that domestic life cannot breathe it; that in an employment where men bring every faculty to the task of destroying others, and preserving themselves from destruction—that *there* is the school to unlearn selfishness, and to train us to the disinterested love of our species! We are asked to believe these things. Yes, when we are prepared to pronounce the New Testament a fable, and Christ’s teachings an untruth, we will believe them, and not till then.

Pray receive my apology for trespassing at such length upon your space.—I remain, faithfully
yours,

RICHARD COBDEN.



L V.

From Mr X. to Mr COBDEN.

Nov. 12th, 1855.

DEAR COBDEN,—Our kind friend Mrs Schwabe has shown me your reply to some hasty remarks of mine on the war. Let me say a word or two more; for though I can say nothing that will be new to you, at least I do not like you to misunderstand my opinions on that great question. This then is my creed. I look upon Russia as the personification of Despotism—the apostle of legitimacy, and the enemy of Liberty and human progress. In the present state of Poland and Hungary we see her work; and Sebastopol tells us for what future outrages on the freedom of Europe she was making preparation. Such a power can only be curbed by war, and must be so curbed sooner or later, if Europe is to remain free. We have no right to bequeath the struggle to our posterity. It is a present duty; and if we believe that God wills the liberty and happiness of mankind, how can we doubt that we are doing God's work in fighting for liberty against aggression? There is no fanaticism in this doctrine. I believe that the Russians themselves have as true ground for thanksgiving under defeat, as we have in victory; because defeat will, under God's providence, bring to them the national blessings which victory secures to us. I never rested the justification of the present war on its popularity; though I believe that God often speaks through the heart of the people; but when you compare the universal enthusiasm for the

present war, with the support given by the people (!) to the war of legitimacy in 1792-3, you know very well that there is no analogy between the two cases. The good men, who were then persecuted for opposing a war to put down freedom (my father was one of them), if now living would have joined heart and soul in the great struggle of this day. I am not one of those 'who would take God's name in vain' in connection with our military operations; nevertheless, I believe his Divine presence to be as certainly in the bloody conflicts of war as in the happier achievements of peace. That war in itself is an unmitigated evil, I feel as deeply as anyone can—but so is the cholera, or an earthquake, or the winter storms that cost us every year so many brave seamen. In fact, the very variety of physical evil, to which human nature is subject, ought to teach us to dread each phase of it the less, whilst we see that, in spite of them all, the world advances, and whilst we know that they have power only on the body and cannot touch the soul. I do not ask in what mean and worldly motives the war had its origin; nor under what unworthy influences our public men may have carried it on. I do not believe *they* dragged us into it, nor the devil either, whatever the Duke of Wellington's faith in such matters may have been; but I do believe that, out of the folly and perverseness of man, the righteousness of God will be worked out. So it was in 1776. If by arguing from results we may test the origin of their causes, I should say that the war of American Independence (most just and necessary on one side, at least) was especially the work of God. I need not point out to you what benefits, to both parties concerned in it, it brought about. I have read your letter in *The Times*. You may be right in your

statistics, but I do not see how they affect the question. Admitting all you say to be true, it would seem that we have more difficulty in reaching the goal than we had hoped—very possibly—that is in the order of providence. Don't think to frighten us with difficulties; show that the war is unjust, that Russia is a peaceful, unaggressive power, that Sebastopol was built for commerce only, and you will do something, but in the meantime we have a noble duty set before us, and we must perform it without counting the cost. That is a logic which every Englishman's heart can understand.

. X.

R. COBDEN, Esq., M.P.

L V I.

Mr COBDEN to Mr X.

MIDHURST, 17 *Novr.* 1855.

MY DEAR SIR,—On the very day on which I received your letter, the purport of which is that we are fighting God's battle in attempting to arrest the unjust aggression of Russia on Turkey, I also received *The Times* of Friday, in which are two leaders—one advocating the annexation of Oude to our Indian Empire, on the plea of the religious differences (!) in that kingdom, and the misgovernment of the people, and especially the danger of allowing such a turbulent neighbour to exist.

Parallel with that article is one condemning the aggressions of Russia, and urging us to a continuance of the war to prevent or punish them. Pray read those articles if you have *The Times* by you, and then, bearing in mind that Oude is a Mahometan kingdom three centuries older than Turkey in Europe, ask yourself whether morality is a geographical question, and whether it can be right in us to hurl the bolts of God's vengeance upon another power for attempting to do precisely what we have been incessantly doing ourselves in India. If you have access to Bishop Heber's works, refer to what he says of the effects of our Machievellian interference in Oude, by which we have prepared the anarchy and confusion as far as we could, which we are now making the pretence for taking possession of that territory. It makes me tremble for the fate of our children when I see the daring hypocrisy (for as such it will be viewed in the eyes of God and man) with which we assume ourselves to be better than other men. Within the last dozen years we have annexed Scinde, the Punjaub and the half of Burmah, and after much study of all the three cases I am at a loss to say which has been marked by traits of the greatest fraud, violence and injustice. You make me shudder when, in the face of facts like these, you ask me to assume that we are set apart to execute God's justice on aggressors. Ask me to discuss the merits of the war on the ground of our own selfish interests, and I could do it, though we are never likely to agree in that view of the question. But I repeat, I have not the hardihood even to entertain the proposition that we are to set up ourselves to vindicate in God's name the abstract law of justice between nations. The whole world is scowling on

us for our presumption and arrogance. Call a jury of the civilised Christian states and ask them which nation has at the present time the greatest extent of territory in its possession, taken by force within the last sixty years from Christian countries, and the answer will be—not Russia, but England. Ask the same question of the Mahometan world. What country has wrested from its possession the largest extent of territory and population, and the reply will be—not Russia, but England. I pray you to turn inwards and think of these things. Depend on it, there is danger to our children if we forget them, for I am one who sincerely believes that, in national affairs, ‘pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.’ And there is much in the aspects of our political and social affairs to make thoughtful men like yourself doubt whether we have not a more pressing task in hand than to settle the quarrels of every other people.—And I remain, very truly yours,

R. COBDEN.

L V I I.

Mr X. to Mr COBDEN.

Dec. 13, 1855.

MY DEAR COBDEN,—I do not know that I should differ much from you in your views of English aggression, though I do not see its parallelism with that of Russia. At least, we did not introduce despotism into our Indian dependencies, and you

will admit that, whatever may have been our shortcomings formerly, our progress in that now is towards good government. But, admitting our wrong-doings, I might ask you, would it not have been well for England if, as now with Russia, some 'allies' had risen up in the days of her aggressions to check her progress and to save her from the fall which you seem to anticipate; and if we have committed great crimes, and now see the wickedness of our course, the misery it has entailed upon others and the danger it has brought upon ourselves, are we not, in the strength of that acquired wisdom, specially called upon to resist the perpetration of similiar atrocities, rather than to fold our arms in apathy and selfishness whilst a war of despotism is raging around us. Let us hope that God will accept our present efforts and sacrifices as some atonement for our national sins. But these considerations are beside the question of the war. You and I look upon that from points of view so different, that we are not likely to agree. *You* see only a quarrel between Russia and Turkey. Whereas, though I think the war may well be justified, even on that narrow ground, *I* regard it as a struggle between nationalities and despotism, and therefore as strictly a defensive war, upon the issue of which depends the solution of the question—Freedom and enlightenment in Europe, including the emancipation of Russia herself, or barbarism for generations? And I hold that the sacrifices already made, great as they have been, have cheaply purchased the postponement, for an indefinite period, if not the absolute impossibility of a renewal of the struggle, which otherwise we might have to fight on our own shores. When I say that we are 'doing the work of God in fighting for liberty against

aggression,' I state a mere truism. In venturing to apply it to our own course in the present war, I do not mean to assume that there is an unusual and special interposition of Providence guiding our armies and fighting on our side, but simply that the present is a crisis in which our duty is clear, and I know no other meaning of duty than doing the work or obeying the will of God. But observe, I said nothing about 'being set apart to execute God's justice.' I entertain no such fanatical notion; and I shrink from such expressions as 'hurling the bolts of God's vengeance,' which certainly I never made use of. The very idea, as applied to a God of love, is unintelligible to me. You tremble for England, so should I for the human race, if I could suppose that God, having created man with almost unbounded capacity for happiness, but with limited knowledge and imperfect wisdom, could leave him to the guidance of his own weak powers. I should despair, indeed, if the affairs of nations were not overruled by a higher wisdom than that of the erring statesmen who apparently govern them; but believing that they are, I see, in the results of this war, a new era for England and her colonies, for civilised Europe and for barbarian Russia.

—Very truly yours,

X.

LVIII.

Mr COBDEN to Mrs SCHWABE.

MIDHURST, 20 *March* 1856.

MY DEAR MRS SCHWABE,—

By the way, it is generally thought that the young Prince Frederic of Prussia is to be married to our Princess Royal. I was dining *tête-à-tête* with Mr Buchanan, the American minister, a few days ago, who had dined the day before at the Queen's table and sat next to the Princess Royal. He was in raptures about her, and said she was the most charming girl he had ever met—'all life and spirit, full of frolic and fun, with an excellent head, and a heart *as big as a mountain*'—those were his words. Another friend of mine, Colonel Fitzmayer, dined with the Queen last week, and in writing to me a description of the company, he says, that when the Princess Royal smiles 'it makes one feel as if additional light were thrown upon the scene.' So I should judge that this same Prince will be a lucky fellow, and I trust he will make a good husband. If not, although a man of peace, I shall consider it a *casus belli*. Remember me, if you please, very kindly to Chevalier Bunsen, his lady and all his family circle. My wife joins me in this and in all kind wishes to yourself and young people.—And believe me, faithfully yours,

R. COBDEN.

L I X.

LETTER from Mr COBDEN's only SON to his PARENTS,
written a few days before the Boy's death, and
received by his Parents the day after the news
of his death reached them by telegraph.

WEINHEIM, *2d of April 1856.*

MY DEAR PAPA AND MAMMA,—I returned to Weinheim on Friday, 28th March, after two weeks' holidays at Heidelberg with Mrs Schwabe. On Monday 31st the school began, and I am now in the fifth class. We went to many places in the holidays, and among others to Neckarsteinach, which is a most beautiful spot on the Neckar. Some distance higher up than Heidelberg there are three old castles, one of which has been turned into a dwelling-place, and the other two are in ruins. On the opposite side of the river there is a village, on the top of a rather high hill, surrounded with the remains of the old fortifications; we also went to Spires and saw the Cathedral, which has some beautiful paintings inside. We went twice to see the Wolfsbrunnen, and I wonder what Quinell would say if he saw the immense trout that were in it. The boy threw in some small white flat fish, and the trout jumped up and swallowed them in a minute. Some of them were more than two feet long and as thick as the lower part of my leg. I am most likely going to the north of Itz

July. Would you tell me where about my uncle and aunt are, because, if they are not far away, I could pay them a visit?

During the daytime the weather is very hot, but it generally freezes during the night, and in the morning we get up at 5 o'clock now. I have got a little garden and a summer-house at one end of it, and I have just begun to plant some things. I don't care a bit for the garden, but I like the summer-house. Sometimes we are allowed to prepare our lessons in our summer-houses, which is very pleasant in summer. There are four storks' nests in the houses near the school, and the storks have all come back now. They fly about very near to the ground sometimes, and sometimes so high that it is hard to recognise them. . . .

I long to see you all, but I do not wish to come to England before I have finished, as I should not at all like to come back again, and I hope you will come and see me in the summer, as you almost promised as much when I left home. I don't know when it is Valentine's Day, but I hope you will send me some nice valentines and then I can send them to other people, as there are no such things in Germany. Mrs Schwabe was very pleased with your letter, and she showed a part of it to Chev. Bunsen, for whom she has copied a part about the Prince of Prussia, which Chev. Bunsen is going to send to the Queen of Prussia, I think. On Sunday the woods on the hill caught fire in two places, behind the castle, and on the mountains a little farther on. The alarm-bell was rung in the churches, and after some time they managed to put it out; not, however, before considerable damage had been done. There were such immense clouds of smoke that one could scarcely see the flames, but they

burst forth every now and then, and it would have been beautiful if it had been night.

Mrs Schwabe, Mrs Curtis, the Bunsens and all send you their kind regards. It is said that peace is signed! Is it true? I have had a letter from Tomasson, who is quite well, and is very glad to leave Worksop. He is going to the London University School. In this school I am getting on best with German, French, Geometry and Calculation. I am behind in singing and drawing. It seems as if I could not make any progress in the fine arts. I can sing nothing from notes; when I have heard a tune a thousand times I can sometimes manage to catch it, and can only sing with a great number, in which case I follow the others. I must now say good-bye.—Believe me, your affectionate son,

R. COBDEN.

I hope all are well at Dunford. My dear mamma, just give me the whereabouts of my uncle and aunt in your next letter, that I may be able to see if we are going near them. Please to send me some valentines if the day is not already past. We had such fun on the 1st April. We sent a French boy with a paper on which was written, 'One kreutzer worth of kick-me-out-of-the-shop.' They gave him some money, and away he went to buy what was written on the paper.

L X.

LETTER from Mr COBDEN to Mrs SCHWABE, after the death of his only Son, of scarlet fever, at Weinheim, near Heidelberg. *April 1856.*

DUNFORD,
Saturday evening, 7 o'clock.

MY DEAR, DEAR FRIEND,—Your letter has this moment reached us, and I am sending this immediately to Chichester to catch the post. The three days that have elapsed since the receipt of Chevalier Bunsen's dreadful letter have not mitigated our misery. Even now I feel that we have not so far recovered from the first stunning effects of the blow to be able to realise the dreadful truth in all its bearings. You will have heard from Chevalier Bunsen that we should find a mournful satisfaction in having his poor remains near us. Now, my dear Mrs Schwabe, I write to say that if you could, without great inconvenience, come and see my poor wife, I should be for ever grateful. I am afraid of her health. She says she feels that she draws nearer to you than anybody on earth, because you saw the last of our dear boy. Yet how can I be so unreasonable as to ask you to make so long a journey to our sad home?

I write in disjointed sentences, and hardly know what I say. God bless you for your letter, which is worthy of your own great and good heart.

My wife wishes me to say that she would like

the poor dear boy's little effects to be gathered together for her, but she wishes those who loved him so much at Weinheim to keep memorials of him.—Again, Heaven bless you, my dear Mrs Schwabe, ever yours,
R. COBDEN.

L X I.

CHEVALIER BUNSEN to MR COBDEN.

CHARLOTTENBERG,
Sunday, April 11th, 1856.

My DEAR AFFLICTED FRIEND,—For so you must allow me to call you after the bond of grief and sympathy has brought us nearer together. You may imagine how this great visitation of God is daily and hourly before our eyes, and the subject of our conversation with our dear common friend, Mrs Schwabe, whose overflowing affection and faithful heart comes out strikingly also on this occasion. I am sure, that if it had not been for her children, she would have been herself the bearer of that message from on high to you and to Mrs Cobden. The sympathy in the Bender family and in the school is truly touching by its intenseness and sincerity. The whole population followed to the grave 'of the son of the great father.' The *people* all over the earth know that they have a friend in you.

Mr Ellisen has sent us yesterday, for translation

and forwarding, the enclosed *medical report*. The original remains here; the translation is literal. Mr Ellisen had written for the report to Weinheim. He adds, in his letter to Mrs Schwabe, that he has shown the paper to his physician, a celebrated man of the profession, who told him that there was at least the comfort to know that nothing had been neglected and all remedies applied which art suggests.

So, with your bereavement has come your desire—I mean the *peace*, the conclusion of which you were anxious for, on account of poor, suffering humanity. God be thanked for peace, which is a blessing in itself; *the* peace concluded is universally felt and understood as the conclusion of the *First Punic* (Cossack) War. The second will be about *Italy*. Napoleon has (I am sure) decided upon it, and Austria and her Italian clients are too blind to avert the stroke; still, it might be avoided by moderate wisdom: Now or never, there is the time for a '*Peace Alliance!*' May the betrothal of 24th May be the symbol of such a blessing. I intend to publish *my plan for a senate of arbitration* and for a *general disarmament*. Palmerston truly said the other day: 'Such a court must be in existence *before* the war.' Italy and Poland alone are the obstacles to considering the state of things, in an international point of view, as *normal*. I have communicated the sketch of my ideas to a member of the British Cabinet in strict confidence.

My application of these momentous subjects to you is this, viz.: That He who struck you so severely holds out to your Christian, human and patriotic heart a new incitement to continue your noble and disinterested efforts for the good of mankind to rise above the holiest and deepest pain.

At the same time there is a second coincidence which strikes me. We all expect to see you prominent in the great work now proposed for the first time—'Popular Education.' There is a great and noble work held out to *you* to sanctify your grief more and more and elevate your energetic mind to the fulness of its strength, at a moment of the deepest affliction. May God's blessing comfort both you and Mrs Cobden.—Ever your sincere friend,

BUNSEN.

L X I I.

MR COBDEN to an ACQUAINTANCE.

MIDHURST, *April 30th*, 1856.

It was not from an insensibility of your kindness that I postponed answering your letter. Be assured that I appreciate more deeply than I could express the motives which prompted you to write to me. It has been the pleasure of God, for His own inscrutable purposes, to visit my wife and myself with the heaviest earthly trial, in the sudden death of an only and affectionate son. I cannot withhold from you the confession that, from yourself and others who have been attracted to our house of mourning, solely by the sympathy of a common sorrow, we have derived strength and consolation. At the moment when we were almost doubting whether the burden

laid on us was not more than we could bear, it was indeed encouraging to receive expressions of hope and confidence from those who had lived through a similar affliction. And whilst groping in doubt and darkness for the solution of that mystery which veils the purposes of the Most High in these terrible visitations, and while almost presuming to call in question the good to be accomplished by inflicting such sorrows on His creatures, again I will confess that your kindness and that of others who, although strangers, have approached us with words of consolation, did impart a ray of light and hope to the gloom which surrounded us. We were thereby enabled to trace one benign object in these sorrowful visitations—that they teach us to love one another and to feel for each other; and your kind and unlooked-for intervention tells us that the void left in the hearth by the loss of those most dear to us will be filled up with an increase of love and sympathy for all who are afflicted and unhappy. For these consolatory reflections inspired by your good letters, I earnestly thank you.—And I remain, very sincerely yours,

R. COBDEN.

LXIII.

MR COBDEN TO MRS SCHWABE.

MIDHURST, 28 *May* 1856.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—Since our visit to Chichester, which lasted a week, my dear wife is, I hope, better. She is exerting herself to the utmost to master her absorbing grief, and the dear little children have succeeded in engaging much of her attention. The difficulty of securing sleep still remains. If passing her time in the open air is calculated to promote sleep, she certainly does everything to secure it, for she is on the lawn or in the meadow all day when the weather permits. She carries a 'spud' in her hand, with which she employs herself in digging up little weeds. It is impossible for any peasant's wife in the village to be more industrious. There is scarcely a weed to be found in our lawn or field. When in the house, she employs herself in knitting. She has also used her pen a little in copying. But hitherto she has not written any letters. When we get to London I hope to induce her to correspond with her children. Still, she is in a prostrate condition, and will, I fear, for some time continue so. Your letter giving an account of your visit to Weinheim she read with much avidity. Nothing interests her so much as facts connected with the later hours of her dear boy's existence. Letters of condolence, however beautifully expressed, fail to effect their object. If human sympathy could cope with such a visitation as hers, we should have been abundantly

sustained, for we have had it most generously manifested from all quarters and ranks—from the prince to the blind and deaf paupers in our village; and we are grateful, for if it be still unavailing it is well-intentioned, and in offering their sympathy they do all that it is in their power to accomplish. But any *facts* respecting the last days of the poor boy send to her relief in a peculiar way. I don't know whether you understand her state of mind, but I can hardly explain it in a better phrase than by saying that she seems to have been harbouring the suspicion that he did not die by fair and proper means, but that she has been somehow cheated out of her dear boy. This state of feeling arises solely from the suddenness with which the blow fell on her at the very moment when she had reason to suppose him in the strongest state of health. Had she stumbled over his corpse at her bedroom door it could not have been more cruelly sudden. This, and *not any mistrust of the good people among whom Richard was placed*, is the cause of the peculiar state of her mind. Any details which may be sent of his illness and death tend to remove this state of doubt and suspicion, and to familiarise her mind with the fact of his *inevitable* death. I have, I fear, been tedious in this analysis of the state of my poor wife's mind, but you will not, I am sure, misunderstand me. And now, my dear friend, to other matters. I have to thank you for having caused Chevalier Bunsen's volume* to be sent to me. It would be presumptuous in me to speak of its learning, but I may be allowed to tender him my thanks for what I prize even higher—its courage and honesty. A friend has just sent me a copy of Peel's *Memoirs*,

* *Signs of the Times.*

an autobiographical fragment, intended as a justification of his conduct in the matter of Catholic emancipation. It will interest surviving politicians of 1829, but to the great public it will be as dull and uninteresting as an old 'Blue Book.' The mass of people don't look behind these great events to ascertain how they were brought about, any more than they examine the works of a church clock to see how they are made to go; all they care about is to know that they 'go right.' Peel has left another volume to explain his conduct on the Corn question. Talking of biographies reminds me of your private memoirs, and I must tell you an anecdote which ought to have a prominent place in them. I may have an imperfect recollection of the details, but I am not mistaken in the main facts. Nearly twenty years ago, Mr Edmund Potter was following a branch of the calico printing business which was no longer profitable. He felt the necessity of making a change, but did not know what it should be. At that time Mr Schwabe was considered to be following a successful branch of the same business. Mr Edmund Potter determined to consult him as to his prospects, and to ask his advice as to what he should do. This was an extraordinary step to take. That one man of business should ask a rival to teach him to make himself more formidable as a competitor argued great confidence in his candour and disinterestedness. Nor was he mistaken in the character of his neighbour. 'You are following an old and worn-out system of business,' said Mr Schwabe. 'But what would you advise me to do?' asked Mr Potter. 'Do just as I am doing,' was the magnanimous reply. Mr Potter followed the advice, and became really, in twelve or fifteen years, Mr Schwabe's greatest competitor. This incident was

told to me many years ago by Mr Potter himself.

—Very sincerely yours, R. COBDEN.

MR COBDEN TO MRS SCHWABE.

MIDHURST, 21 June 1856.

MY DEAR MRS SCHWABE,—I have purposely delayed writing till you returned to Heidelberg, that I might speak to you, amongst other things, of the valuable MS. work by Chevalier Bunsen which you left in my hands. I have read it very carefully, and with a due suspicion of my own judgment, because, being myself identified with the principles of International Arbitration and reduction of armaments, I should naturally wish to see so great an authority as his arrayed on the same side. Having this suspicion of myself, I have resolved to satisfy my conscience by being very critical, so as to prove that I have quite as much regard for his fame as for my own principles. I do not know whether Chevalier Bunsen intended his work *for publication* in its present form, or to be merely the 'heads' of a more extended argument, or to be communicated exclusively to the members of the Peace Conference Committee. Whichever of these uses he applied it to, it would be sure to advance the cause I have at heart, because the mere fact of such a mind having been occupied with the subject would not fail to give it increased prominence and importance. But if it were his intention to publish the argument in its present form, I should wish previously to suggest

some remarks for his consideration. But I will not do so now at any length in my uncertainty as to his intentions. I may say generally, however, that I concur with him in his views, and am especially pleased that he has adopted the principle of non-intervention as an essential part of his plan. As a general remark, I should be inclined to submit to him whether he has not committed himself too much to DETAILS in his plan for the 'Peace Senate' and the 'Tribunal of Arbitration.' As a general rule, I have found that, in advocating the adoption of a *new principle* in public affairs, it is well not at first to lay before the world all the details of a working scheme, because the supporters of things as they are may thus be able to lead the discussion away from the main question by joining issue upon some minor points. I may add, that it appears to me, that if the paper is to be published in its present form, the introductory observations respecting the Prize Essays will hardly be intelligible to the general reader without some explanation as to what the Prize Essays were. But I will, for the present, content myself with saying that I concur with the author in the arguments he has advanced. But what I am anxious to know is, whether he contemplates giving them to the world in some form *under his own name*. That is what would most powerfully help the good cause. And if he has determined to do so, there is no one, not even himself, who would be more anxious than I should be to see it in every respect invulnerable to the attacks of his opponents and worthy of his world-wide fame. And if my poor criticism can be of the slightest use it shall be frankly at his service. You will be anxious to know what we have been doing since I last wrote. It has been a somewhat different life

to that you witnessed here. Last week we spent entirely in London at my lodgings. My wife did not see any of her friends. Indeed, it was a bargain before we went from home that we would not pay or receive visits. But we walked in the parks, and she admitted that the stream of strange faces that passed us in the streets did divert her mind from its thoughts. Her brother was a good deal with us, and I was thus enabled to give a little time to public and private business. We came back on Saturday last, and have spent this week at home with the children. Next Tuesday we shall go to London again, to remain for a week or a fortnight. This plan will, I hope, gradually introduce her again to the outer world, and it enables me to give a little attention to my public duties. Though, to confess the truth, I do not see what good I could do now by the closest attention to the House of Commons. The only question on which I felt anxious was the American difficulty. But when I was in London I saw Mr Dallas, the present minister from that country, and satisfied myself the business would be amicably settled. Tell Chevalier Bunsen that, glad as I am that the enlistment squabble is settled, I think the Ministry have acted shabbily in making a scapegoat of Crampton, who merely fulfilled instructions, and for whose good conduct Lord Clarendon has vouched up to the last. In my opinion the Cabinet, in accepting Crampton's dismissal, ought to have resigned, and thus, by taking on themselves the sacrifice, as they were bound to do, they would have saved the country from a humiliation. It remains to be seen whether the House of Commons will pass a vote of censure on the Government for their *previous* maintenance of a bad cause, which has led to this diplomatic disaster. The House of

Lords would be more likely (as in the Greek Pacifico affair) to take the right course. I observe what you say about Professor Scott's Candidature.* If it were in my power I would gladly aid him, but I suspect that the attempts to influence the judges in this case would probably do as much harm as good. I believe the desire will be to elicit honestly the best man, and therefore the undoubted merits of your friend will give him a good chance of success. We have received Mrs Bender's feeling and affectionate letter, and also a shorter one in English from Mr Charles Bender,† to whom I have written in reply, begging him to offer my wife's excuses for not writing. Yesterday I sent you a newspaper containing a short notice of the death of Mr Samuel Gurney. My friend Mr Sturge, who was at the funeral, says there was a very great number of persons present, upwards of a hundred carriages, and a thousand spectators. He has left with his family the consoling memory of a thousand virtues and charities. My wife begs me to say that, although unable to use her pen, she considers herself writing to you by my hand. She is glad to hear from you, and of you and all who are dear to you. We beg to be remembered to the family at Charlottenberg* and to your own circle.—And believe me, my dear friend, faithfully yours,

R. COBDEN.

* Professor Scott was the successful candidate for the appointment of Principal of Owens College.

† Master of the school at which Mr Cobden's son died.

L X I V.

Letter from Mr COBDEN to CHEVALIER BUNSEN.

GLYN GARTH, *September 27th, 1856.*

MY DEAR CHEVALIER BUNSEN,—Our kind and energetic friend, Mrs Schwabe, has induced us to come and take possession, for a month or two, of her beautiful place on the Menai Straits, of which the above engraving gives a faint idea. The change of scene and the duty and responsibility, which it will impose on my wife, of educating her little girls, will, I hope, restore her to a state of comfort and cheerfulness. I cannot allow our dear friend to return to Germany without being the bearer of a few lines to you upon the subject of the *Memoirs* which you were so good as to send me, and which I have allowed, confidentially, Mr Richard of the Peace Society to peruse, and in whose hands they still remain. I was glad to hear that you intended to bring out your views on this subject in your second volume of *Signs of the Times*. Nothing could be more calculated to give a world-wide interest to your work, for it is a subject in which every nation has an equal stake. The moment is opportune for dealing with the question, for the international relations of Europe are at present under no law but that of brute force. It is most

* Chevalier Bunsen's residence near Heidelberg.

offensive to see the three or four 'Great Powers' arrogating to themselves the right of settling the affairs of Europe. Not because Russians, Austrians, Frenchmen and Englishmen have more intelligence, or a higher moral sense than Swiss, Dutch, Belgians, Saxons or Danes, but because they happen to be the stronger in fleets and armies. If you can say anything calculated to put an end to this state of things, and place all the powers under the safeguard of some federal principle or international code, you will be doing much to bring the conduct of Governments into harmony with the advanced civilisation of the age. And you will be doing as great a service to the leading Powers as to the weaker states, for this system of armed intervention in the affairs of other nations necessitates the keeping up of large military and naval establishments, which are burdensome to the people, so much so that, if the system go on much longer, it will be a privilege to belong to a second or third-rate power, to escape from the taxation which the others will have to bear. The principle of 'Arbitration' has gained very much by the modified declaration in its favour by the Congress. From an Utopian dream it has thereby been elevated into a practical question. I shall always consider this act as a redeeming point in the career of Lord Clarendon, whose foreign policy has reflected too much of the Palmerston line to have always gained my approbation. I must not forget to do justice to the energy of Joseph Sturge and his companions of the Peace Society, who went to Paris during the Congress, and at the risk of ridiculous failure bored the plenipotentiaries to declare in favour of Arbitration. They gained the ear of Lord Clarendon, and probably may have contributed to bring him to the point of action. Really, these good Quakers are the

salt of the earth! Sturge and another 'Friend' are now in Finland seeking out the poor victims of our blockade and piratical descents on that coast, with a view to raising a subscription for their relief. And this brings me to add a few words upon another subject to which you may not think it amiss to refer in your projected volume. You are aware that at the Paris Congress a declaration was put forth against privateering, coupled with the full recognition of the rights of neutral, against which England was ready to contest with all the world sixty years ago. Now, we acknowledge that—1st, The neutral flag covers enemy's goods, with the exception of contraband of war; 2d, Neutral goods, with the exception of contraband of war, are not liable to capture under enemy's flags. I would say in passing that I doubt whether the plenipotentiaries knew the full force of what they were doing when they agreed to this declaration. But, as you are aware, the Americans have been applied to, to give in their adhesion to the new Maritime Code promulgated at Paris. In their reply they say that the above two concessions to neutrals were always advocated by them, and they agree to adopt them; but on the question of privateering they say,—'We don't keep large military navies like England and France, therefore, in case of war, we should be obliged to rely on our mercantile marine for the defence of our honour—at least, at its commencement. To these merchant ships we should give precisely the same commission—to destroy, burn, or sink or capture enemy's property afloat—which you give to your royal and imperial navies. Your proposal merely denies to *such* an improvised navy the right of capturing merchant vessels, in order to keep a monopoly of that practice for your royal imperial navies. Now, we do not see any

difference, either in morality or injury, whether a merchant ship be pounced upon and carried off by a regularly-built ship of war, or by a merchantman converted into a vessel of war. *If you really wish to put down the system of robbing private individuals on the sea, as you have done on land, go a step further and declare that, in case of war, enemy's property (excepting contraband of war, or, if on board vessels, breaking an effective blockade) SHALL NOT BE LIABLE TO CAPTURE; to this we are willing to agree.* Such, in substance, is the answer of the Americans. It has staggered and astounded some of our SLOW people, but, depend upon it, we shall be compelled to accept the American offer. Having gone so far at the Paris Congress, it will be necessary for our own sakes to carry out our principles still further. I know that, when Parliament meets, some of our leading shipowners will advocate this putting of property afloat upon the same footing as ashore. This will be a great revolution in our war. Plunder and prize money being abolished, there will be nothing but hard knocks for the combatants. Railways will render blockades ineffective. Thus, naval war will become little more than a duel between the Governments of maritime nations. Need I add that everything which thus diminishes the motives of self-interest for entering upon hostilities lessen the chances of war. Is it not evident that the world is outgrowing the barbarous practices of former times, and that the vast interest arrayed on the side of peaceful commerce and industry will demand from Government some better mode of adjusting their disputes than an appeal to the sword? Do not forget in your argument to remind the Governments of Europe that the new world and such colonies as Australia and New Zealand are growing up as

rivals to the old, and are tempting away our capital and labour to more favourable fields of exertion. These new countries have no 'balance of power,' no 'state system,' as in Europe, involving the necessity of keeping up large military establishments, no crushing debts and taxes. The Governments of Europe ought to put their houses in order to be prepared for the competition which awaits them in the new world. The power of the United States was felt in the commencement of the late war. I have reason to know that Mr Buchanan intimated to our Government that any attempt to renew the exercise of the belligerent rights, which were enforced at the expense of a war with the United States in 1812, would be resisted by the American people, and I believe it was the fear of a collision with that country which induced us at the outbreak of the Russian war to waive the exercise of those rights. The United States are now only in their infancy, and yet they have as large a mercantile tonnage as England. Yet our European 'State System' is still founded on the same principle as it was when Europe comprised the whole civilised world, and when America was parcelled out into Colonial possessions of England, Spain, etc. Is there not an argument in the altered state of things in favour of a revision of our European system? Can we any longer with safety ignore the fact that Europe is not only not the whole civilised world, but in extent of territory not the half of it? Must not the old world, if it is to maintain a rivalry, or endure a comparison with the prosperous nations of the West, adopt an international code which shall put the States of Europe upon a footing of security, either by the federation plan, or some other mode, and thus enable them to dispense with those enormous

and menacing armaments which are crushing the tax-payers to the dust? Excuse the length of this letter. I am most anxious to see your name associated with the advocacy of reform of the physical force system, which at present prevails in the international relations of Europe. The very fact of *your* denouncing the present state of things will be an epoch in the march of peace principles. I need only add that we in England will most gladly do our utmost to disseminate your views. I took the liberty of suggesting in a former letter that it would probably be well not to attempt to offer a plan complete in all its details in the first instance, but to be content with the advocacy of the principle with such details as might be necessary to give full explanation of the plan. But you will be the best judge of this. In conclusion, I beg to be kindly remembered to Madame de Bunsen and your amiable family circle, in which my wife desires to join.—And believe me, yours truly,

R. COBDEN.

L X V.

MR COBDEN to MRS SCHWABE.

GLYN GARTH, 24 *November* 1856.

MY DEAR MRS SCHWABE,—You are sometimes so good as to take an interest in what I am doing, and I therefore send you the enclosed letter which, although it may be rather dry and technical in its details, has a bearing upon the interests of humanity which will not fail to interest you. Would you be so very good as to forward this letter, after you have perused it, to Chevalier Bunsen. He is, I hope, now engaged upon the work to which he proposed to apply his great powers before January—I mean the question of the international relations of Europe. He will see that the time is ripening fast when the world will no longer be content to be made to play a game of blind-man's-buff by the diplomatists and crowned heads for the benefit and amusement of the Palmerstons and Louis Napoleons of the day. What we want is the recognition of a law, or, at least, a principle for controlling the international relations of Europe. And it belongs to Germany, and especially to such minds as Chevalier Bunsen's, to pioneer the path for this great change. On the same day, when the letter was read to the Chamber of Commerce, a deputation from the American and European Electric Telegraph Company was present to explain the progress making in that great work which will be completed next summer, when a message from England, transmitted at twelve o'clock at noon, will reach New York at seven o'clock in the

same morning, *gaining five hours* by travelling faster than the earth revolves upon its axis. Surely, in an age when such things are possible, it ought not to be Utopian to try to devise some better system for the international government of Europe than the 'Balance of Power' and the superstitious faith in secret diplomacy.

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R. COBDEN.

GLYN GARTH, 15th December 1856.

MY DEAR MRS SCHWABE,—If I had been so situated that a choice was left to me, I could not have resisted your energetic and eloquent invitation to remain here* for the commencement of the new year. But I have many sufficient reasons why I am compelled to return home. Parliament meets in the first week in February. I have many little private arrangements to make before then, at home, which will occupy a considerable time. There is, for instance, during the recess of Parliament, a constant delivery of 'Blue Books,' and other papers, going on, which have been accumulating during my absence, and which I must examine before the House meets; and I must prepare myself a little for taking my part in the debates of the session. Now, I cannot do these things *here*, but must be at home where I know how to put my hand upon my books and papers. In a word, my dear friend, I must have a month at Dunford before the meeting of Parliament. I can appreciate the force of all you urge respecting the heavy ordeal which my poor

* Mrs Schwabe had placed her house on the Menai Straits a Mr Cobden's disposal.

wife* will have to go through in returning home a this dark, dismal season of the year. Still, I do not think it would much relieve her if we were to postpone our journey for a few weeks. Besides, we have taken the precaution of inviting some friends to stay with us. *That* I considered absolutely necessary, and I hope the occupation of housekeeping will offer a useful distraction to my wife's mind. But enough of this topic. We shall go to Pendyffryn on the 24th, and remain there for not more than a week—thence to Birmingham to stay for a day with Mr Sturge, and then home. In the meantime, we shall have to take leave of our kind neighbours here—for we have had very great kindness from everybody. The Williams† have been most friendly from the beginning. I have dined several times at Rhianva, and on one occasion Lady Sarah came with her dear little children to lunch and spend the afternoon with us. The Misses Roberts have been most attentive and neighbourly, and we have dined with their father, with whom I got on exceedingly well, and found him a shrewd, unprejudiced old fellow. Mr Jones, the curate, comes often to play a game at billiards with me. Sir Richard Bulkeley and I are engaged to go on Thursday to Holyhead, where we shall stay the night at Mr O. Stanley's, and inspect the works going on at the harbour. Mr Bazley and Mr Ashworth from Manchester are coming to-day to see me. I have written to assure them that you will be glad to hear that they are passing the night under your spacious roof. We have had two or three days of very boisterous weather, but it is now calm again. The dear little

* Mrs Cobden had not recovered from the shock of the sudden death of her only son.

† Sir John and Lady Sarah Williams of Rhianva.

children are in the enjoyment of most boisterous health. I wrote to Mr H. Richard requesting him to deliver the MS. for Chevalier Bunsen to your son Edmund, which he has done. I enclose a slip containing the letter which you were so kind as to express a wish to possess. I sent a newspaper containing it to Chevalier Bunsen. My wife joins me in kindest love to you and your family circle and party.—And believe me, very sincerely yours,

R. COBDEN.

MIDHURST, 11 *April* 1857.

MY DEAR MRS SCHWABE,—My sister has sent me your note making kind inquiries after my health, which I am happy to say is rapidly recovering from the prostration into which I fell from overwork during the elections. I attempted to do more at Manchester and Huddersfield than I was able to perform. You will have been a little surprised perhaps at the results of the contests at those places. So far as my case is concerned, the defeat implies really nothing. My good friends ought not to have launched me at Huddersfield when I had no chance from the first, owing to the ground having been previously occupied by a person having great local influence. In fact, the election did not turn upon public principles at all. The case of Manchester is very different, particularly as regards John Bright, who has conferred great benefits on the people, and who was suffering from illness brought on by excessive labour in the public service. Surely, under those circumstances, he was entitled to a little forbearance, if not gratitude, at the hands of his constituents. The secret of the change in their views towards him is to be sought, I fear, in their altered circumstances. They have become prosperous and rich, with Free

Trade, and are too genteel to tolerate the plain blue Quaker who helped them out of their Protectionist adversity; and so they kick down the ladder by which they have reached their prosperity! It is the way of this wicked world. But the time will come when Manchester will again want a stout heart and eloquent tongue to rescue it from other difficulties and dangers, and then—and *not, I fear, till then*—it will remember with remorse its ingratitude to John Bright. On personal grounds it suits both him and myself to be for a season out of Parliament. It will give him a complete repose which he could not have had whilst under the sense of responsibility attached to the representation of so large a constituency. For myself I have many private and domestic reasons for desiring a respite from public duties. The dose administered to me at Huddersfield is, I confess, a little nauseous, but, like other medicine, it will, I hope, be of great benefit to me.

—Believe me, very sincerely yours,

R. COBDEN.

MIDHURST, 26 *Apr.* 1857.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—Here is the note* which you sent for my perusal. I return it with thanks. Be assured I am very grateful for all the kind words you send me. It is always pleasant to be conscious of having the good opinion of those we respect and love when one is placed in a dilemma which might otherwise almost tempt him to fear he had forfeited the confidence of the world. My own temperament is however, very well calculated to bear up against any little political reverse such as I am now experiencing.

* A note expressing disappointment at Mr Cobden's exclusion from Parliament.

encing, for there are few persons so little dependent on the external world as myself for contentment and peace of mind. And although I have lived for twenty years in almost constant agitation and political excitement, I am so little dependent on it for good spirits or happiness, that I am never more cheerful than when alone in my woods, or on the downs. My wife joins me in kindest regards.—And believe me, very sincerely yours,

R. COBDEN.

MIDHURST, 15 *May* 185

MY DEAR FRIEND,—It is very good of you to place so much confidence in my judgment as to defend my conduct on Rajah Brooke's affair, even without knowing all the facts of the case. In reply to your inquiry, I will now, in as few words as possible, give you the substance of that business. Mr Brooke was an adventurous gentleman, who one day took it into his head to sail from England to the coast of Borneo, in a vessel partly laden with merchandise, with which he entered upon some trading transactions with a native Rajah of Sarawak, and it ended, as was no doubt intended, in the clever Englishman dispossessing the Bornean of his authority, and dubbing himself Rajah! This did not concern me, and I did not trouble myself about him. But he quarrelled with the neighbouring tribes, and called in the help of British ships of war, and they, between them, and with the help of other savages, killed some 1000 or 1500 of the natives. It was like a battue of sheep or rabbits, *for our forces did not get a scratch in return.* When Parliament met there was a claim made for 'head-money,' to the amount of £15,000 or £20,000, on the plea that they were pirates. It was there

that I, as in duty bound, interfered; and opposed the payment of the money. I was, of course, opposed by the Government and abused by *The Times*. The money was paid. But at the very same time the ministry brought in a bill to put an end to the payment of head-money for the future, and *practice was abolished from that moment*. So, usual, my policy was admitted to be right, though I was soundly abused for advocating it. As respects Rajah Brooke himself, I have rather a sympathy than a prejudice for such adventurers, though I gave them little credit for all those lofty motives of action which your susceptible, credulous and imaginative friend attributes to the Rajah. I have little faith in that missionary of civilisation and Christianity whose path is crimsoned with human blood. Tell your friend that it was not by sanguinary deeds, but by the display of temperate justice and moderation, superior to the character of the heathen population by which he was surrounded, that Sir Stamford Raffles acquired his undying fame in the East. Remind him, too, how very differently the great circumnavigator, Captain Cook, treated the savages of New Zealand, when he visited their island, murdered and actually ate some of his crew. Instead of retaliating with fire and sword, as Rajah Brooke would have done, he showed his superiority by giving them specimens of pigs and potatoes, and thus weaning them from cannibalism. *These* are the heroes of humanity and the benefactors of mankind whose names will be endeared to our best sympathies so long as the world endures. . . . You would be delighted, I am sure, to hear of Mrs Gaskell's great success with her biography of the authoress of *Jane Eyre*. It is *the* book of the season. I can't tell you how

glad I was to read the criticisms in the *Athenæum* and other first-class reviews. Give our united kind regards to Harriet and Mrs Curtis, and all about you.—And believe me, very sincerely yours,

R. COBDEN.

MIDHURST, 31 *August* 1857.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—Lord Clarence's* letter will, I am sure, be quite safe in your keeping. I send one also (which you need not return) from Mr Otway, who sat in the last Parliament, but is not, I am sorry to say, now a member. Lady Clarence is his sister. He is, I believe, visiting your neighbours, and I can commend him to your friendly notice. He showed both talent and conscientiousness in the House. I have been shocked and grieved at the violent deaths of two such good men as Rawson and Platt. And these horrid Indian massacres keep me in a constant shudder. There has been nothing so bad in modern history since the Revolution in St Domingo sixty years ago. Remember me to all, high and low.—And believe me, very truly yours,

R. COBDEN.

MIDHURST, 28 *September* 1857.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—The only occasions when I feel a reluctance to write to you are when I receive applications for assistance in your works of benevolence and am unable to comply with your wishes. I am sorry to say I am in this predicament respecting your friend who is looking for an appointment in the India Company's service. Perhaps there is no one so little entitled as myself to solicit, or even to accept,

* Lord Clarence Paget.

any share of the patronage of that body. I did all in my power to abolish the Company and place India under the direct government of the Queen. It would therefore be very inconsistent if I were to become a recipient of the patronage of the Directors. Besides, I suppose there will be a great number of officers already in India waiting for employment in consequence of so many native regiments having mutinied. There must be seventy or eighty regiments at least which have gone off, having in some few cases first shot their British officers, but generally leaving them with no longer any regimental duties to perform, and therefore looking to the Government for fresh appointments. There will be some more European regiments created for the Indian service, but not half so many as have disbanded themselves in India; and I should suggest it as a matter for your friend's consideration, whether he is not on a wrong scent in looking in that direction for employment. It is *men*, not officers, that are wanted. Why don't fathers give their sons a couple of hundred pounds to set them up as farmers in the colonies or America, where the climate is suitable to the English constitution, instead of looking to the army and to so unhealthy a destination as Hindostan? Is clearing the forest, or cultivating the prairie, a less honourable or useful pursuit than lounging in barracks or thinning the ranks of our own species? What hideous news we get from India! It keeps me in a constant shudder. What a result after a century of contact with a Christian Government! It ought to cover us with shame as well as excite our horror and indignation when we read of the atrocities perpetrated in cold blood on the poor women and children. Doctor Livingstone has nothing so bad to reveal of the

races of Central Africa. With kindest regards to you all.—Believe me, very truly yours,

R. COBDEN.

P.S.—Will you, my dear friend, be so good as to read the enclosed prospectus, and if possible to aid Mrs W. in her laudable efforts to support her young children. A widow struggling with adversity, and striving to maintain herself in independence, is one of the most touching appeals to our sympathy. Be so good as to name her case to Mrs D. I don't know what prospects Mrs W. has of success, but she can only succeed through the kind co-operation of influential friends.

MIDHURST, 16 *February* 1858.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—Before your kind note reached me, I was thinking of writing to you, for I had not forgotten that I was a letter in your debt. But what can I say from this quiet spot likely to interest you? In regard to politics I am positively growing so indifferent that I rarely read the leaders of *The Times*, and hardly keep up the thread of political occurrence even to the extent of perusing the Parliamentary Debates. I spend a great part of my time in the open air, and am becoming a very enthusiastic *farmer*! Still, I have found time to read the pamphlet forwarded to me by your friend, and a most touching and harrowing narrative it is! But if I ask myself—what can be done in *England* to rectify the system of Government under which such fearful wrongs are perpetrated at *Naples*? I fear the answer must be—nothing. Nay, I am not sure that any direct interference in the affairs of that country by the English people or Government is not calculated to do more harm than good. Gladstone's

pamphlet in behalf of Poerio was a noble and eloquent vindication of the cause of truth and justice. And yet, I confess, I think it is doubtful whether it did not aggravate the victim's guilt in the eyes of the Neapolitan Government and lead to greater severity of punishment rather than to a mitigation of his sufferings. For it made it a point of honour with the King of Naples *not* to give way and thus admit himself to have been proved by a foreigner to have committed a great injustice on one of his own subjects. This is a very mean motive of action—but the King of Naples is just precisely one of those narrow-minded and obstinate characters most likely to be actuated by such feelings. I confess, if I were Poerio, I would rather that that pamphlet had not been published, and yet, I honour the generous impulse which led Mr Gladstone to write it. I need hardly add that I should expect little advantage from any agitation which your generous correspondent might excite in this country in regard to Neapolitan affairs. As respects the two Englishmen now under trial at Salerno, we must, of course, leave them to be dealt with according to the laws of the country. Unless, indeed, it be thought likely to add to our national dignity, if, after meekly submitting to alter our own law at the dictation of the French colonels, we should indemnify our pride by compelling a weak state like Naples to follow our base example! I am glad to hear good accounts of you all. What terrible wrecks we have beheld in the commercial world since I had the pleasure of seeing you. I return the letter which you were so good as to send for my perusal. I honour the generous and catholic sympathies of the writer; but you know my strong opinions upon the subject of *non-intervention* in the affairs of foreign countries—

opinions which I find strengthened every day, and which, of course, preclude me from rendering any assistance to your fair correspondent. With my kindest regards to your dear family circle.—Believe me, my dear friend, very sincerely yours,

R. COBDEN.

MIDHURST, 27 *Feb.* 1858.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I ought to be very careful not to fall into any inconsistencies when writing to one who does me the honour to remember so well the contents of my letters as you appear to do. It is indeed a great compliment in these fast times to have one's written opinions of 1851 quoted. I remember quite well how sincerely I sympathised with Mr Gladstone when he published his pamphlet in favour of Poerio, nor would I now say that, even if the effect of that eloquent protest have been the very opposite of what he expected as regards Poerio himself, it ought not to have been published. On the contrary, I agree with you that humanity gains on the whole whenever the commanding voice of genius is uttered in defence of truth and justice. You rightly interpret my views when you say I am opposed to any armed intervention in the affairs of other countries. I am against any interference by the Government of our country in the affairs of another nation, even if it be confined to moral suasion. Nay, I go farther and disapprove of the formation of a society or organisation of any kind in England for the purpose of interfering in the internal affairs of other countries. I have always declined to sanction anti-slavery organisations formed for the purpose of agitating the slavery question in the United States. Now, I suspect that your correspondent would like to form a society for

ameliorating the condition of the Italians. I admire her benevolence, but doubt her judgment. Such a society will, I fear, do more harm than good—I mean, that it will operate injuriously upon the fate of the very persons she wishes to save, for it will awaken the fears and provoke the repressive measures of the governments of Italy. However, I have too much respect and sympathy for those who endeavour honestly to serve the cause of humanity anywhere, to wish to be thought an intolerant opponent of your fair filibuster! I was delighted to see the result of Gibson's motion. There was surely something more than chance in that strange spectacle which witnessed the procession of Bright and Gibson up the floor of the House to deliver a sentence of official death upon the man who flattered himself a few months since he had trampled them in the dust. I have never felt regret at not being in the House until I read the account of that scene. I enclose Captain Henry's address, but I am not sure he is at home. No doubt, however, a letter would be forwarded to him. My wife joins me in kind regards to all your domestic circle.—And believe me, sincerely yours,

R. COBDEN.

MIDHURST, 23 *December* 1858.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I have long wished to know your movements and to inquire after your health. . . . I have not a word of politics for you. I refuse to re-enter the vortex. Other matters engross my time. Bright is throwing all his energy into the Reform question. But the people are prosperous and therefore not discontented, and it is very difficult under such circumstances to raise a cry for Reform. With wheat at 40s. a quarter, there never was much political agitation. The aristocracy of this country

owe us Free Traders a good deal for having taught them to give free scope to the labour and the *appetites* of the people. The big loaf has choked Chartism and laid even Radicalism to sleep. This is a meagre note, but it is enough to let you know that my wife and I care for you and wish you not to forget us. She desires to join me in kindest regards to you and all around you.—And believe me, ever yours truly,

R. COBDEN.

L X V I.

MR COBDEN TO LORD PALMERSTON.

6 RUE DE BERRY,
PARIS, 29 October 1859.

MY DEAR LORD PALMERSTON,—It is right that I should let you know what I have heard and done since I have been here. On Tuesday I met Mr Rouher, the Minister of Commerce, for the first time, at a *tête-à-tête* dinner with Mr Chevalier. He has Free Trade sympathies, but no more power to initiate policy in the Emperor's Government than a schoolboy has to control his master. Indeed, he very candidly admitted that everything depended on the Emperor. I expressed a wish to have an interview in the least formal and most private manner with his Majesty, and the next day Mr Rouher brought me an appointment for an audience at St Cloud on Thursday. In the meantime, Lord Cowley had been kind enough to offer to procure me an interview

through Mr Chevalier. The Emperor began the conversation, after a few introductory remarks, by complaining of the English press. I told him that I had myself been accused of every crime almost by the press (including an attempt at murder!), and that I had learned to laugh at it. He continued this topic by asking me to point out a single act, during the ten years he had been in power, which had not been dictated by a desire to stand well with England and to keep the two countries in a state of harmony and friendship, but the press had completely defeated his object. After reminding him that I had blamed, both in Parliament and in public meetings, the attacks made on the Government of France, in England, I said that he should bear in mind that his name, which had such a charm in the cottages of France, had still a sound which carried a traditional alarm into our houses, and that this feeling was worked upon by parties who, for their own ends, persuaded the people that he intended to repeat the career of his uncle; and, with some excuses, I ventured to add that the way in which he had entered on the war in Italy, without a previous *exposé des motifs*, had given great force to this persuasion. He interrupted me by saying that he had explained his reasons. I told him that what I meant was, that he had not appealed to the world with a manifesto of his grievances and objects, and that if he had done so, from what I knew of the opinion in England and America, where the Austrian Government had hardly a friend, the feeling would have been so universally in his favour that a war would not have been necessary. But the suddenness and secrecy with which this great war was entered upon alarmed people lest the same thing should be repeated. After some

further conversation about the state of feeling, which I admitted was very bad, if not perilous, in England, and which he said was brought to such a state in France that he seemed to be almost the only man friendly to England left, I expressed an opinion, very frankly, that the Governments of both countries, professing as they did to be friendly, would be responsible, if not blamable, were nothing done to try to put an end to this state of things. He asked what he could do more than he had done. I then turned to the question which I wished to talk upon, and urged the necessity of bringing the two countries into greater commercial dependence on each other. We talked for a full hour on the subject. My only fear is lest I talked too much, and may have sometimes forgotten that I was not speaking to the same gentleman with whom I had breakfasted at Mr Milne's three days after his escape from the *château* of Ham. But he is an excellent listener, and from every remark which fell from him he seemed to be favourable to Free Trade. (I have heard this even from his enemies.) But I came to the conclusion that he is very ill-informed on the subject, and that, as a consequence, he has a great fear of the Protectionists, whose numbers, power and influence he greatly exaggerates. Of course, I did all I could to take this party down in his estimation. He told me that a large majority of the Legislative Body and the Senate were determined Protectionists, and that the only way in which he could effect a change would be through a treaty with a foreign power, the provisions of which would then become law by his simple 'decree,' and he asked me whether England would enter into a commercial treaty. I explained that we could give no exclusive advantages, but

that I was sure your Government would be glad to make some simultaneous changes in our tariff and embody them in a *treaty*, if that would facilitate his action in the same direction ; and I explained how it might be possible next year for Mr Gladstone to co-operate with him in this reciprocal reduction of duties. I told him I thought we could abolish all the duties on the *Articles de Paris*, and enable him to say to the Parisians that everything they made would go as fully into London as into Rome. He seemed pleased at this idea. He remarked that he was under a promise to the manufacturers not to abolish the prohibitive system before 1861. I told him that if the treaty was entered into next year, it was not necessary that it should wholly take effect in one or even two years ; that, if spread over three years, it might be as well for all parties. All that I wanted was the moral effect of the fact that the new commercial policy was adopted. I took this opportunity of explaining, in very emphatic terms, that England did not want customers, that we had already more markets than we could supply, that in a large number of our mills and manufactories the machinery was standing partially idle owing to the want of hands, whilst there were large orders in hand beyond what could be executed. He asked me how I should go to work if I were in his place. I told him that I should act precisely as I did in England, by dealing first with one article, which was the keystone to the system—in England that article was corn, in France it is iron—that I should abolish totally, and at once, the duty on pig-iron, and leave only a very small revenue duty, if any, on bars, plates, etc., and that I would buy off the opposition of the iron-masters by appointing a commission to afford them an indemnity out of a loan to be raised

for the purpose. This would render it much easier to deal with all the other industries, whose general complaint is that they cannot compete with England owing to the high price of iron and coal. (I am told there is not much difficulty in making coal free.) He made me repeat to him these last remarks. He asked me to furnish him with a list of the articles imported into England from France upon which I thought we could reduce the duties. I promised to give him a general idea, which I have since done through Mr Rouher. He asked whether the repeal of the Corn Laws had thrown any land out of cultivation, and when I told him it had had the very opposite effect—that in nothing had Free Trade been so completely triumphant as in the improvement it had effected in agriculture—and when I described the great veneration in which Sir Robert Peel's memory is held by the people, he remarked,—‘I am charmed and flattered at the idea of doing the same work for France, but the difficulties are very great. We do not make reforms in France, we only make revolutions.’ He alluded to the way in which he had been thwarted by the Protectionists in some small measures of reform, such as the admission of iron for shipbuilding and the removing of the *sliding scale*. I was struck with his repeated allusions to the opposition he had to encounter and his evident fear of a mere handful of monopolists. I tried every argument to convince him that, instead of injuring the protected interests, he would render a greater service to them than any other class by subjecting them to a little wholesome competition. But he seems, like almost every Frenchman I know (excepting my friend Mr Chevalier), to be very deficient in moral courage. The result of my interview was a conviction that, if left to himself, the Emperor would

at once enter upon a Free Trade policy, but I am by no means certain that he will do so, and to counter the dangers which he imagines are in his way. I may add, however, that Mr Chevalier, who had an interview just before myself, is very sanguine that something will be done. I must, in conclusion say that I have taken care to explain that I am not acting in a representative character, but only in private capacity; and, therefore, I cannot compromise anybody by my awkwardness as a courtier or my unskilfulness as a diplomatist. I communicate all that passes to Lord Cowley, from whom I have received great courtesy and kindness.—I remain very truly yours,

RICHARD COBDEN.

Do not trouble yourself to answer this.

RIGHT HON. VISCOUNT PALMERSTON, M.P., etc., etc.

P.S.—Saturday Evening—Since writing the above, I have seen Mr Fould, by an appointment made for me by Lord Cowley, and he tells me that the Emperor has gained courage, and he (Mr Fould) and Mr Rouher propose to meet me next week to enter more into details. I suppose I ought to be very mistrustful of these politicians and suspect them of merely wishing to amuse me, in order to stand better with you and Lord Cowley on some other questions in debate between you to which they attach far more importance than to mine. However, my time is of little value, and, therefore, no harm can come of it. In the meantime I have to furbish up all my old A B C arguments to remove their apprehensions of an 'inundation' of British products, and of their population being 'thrown out of work,' etc., etc. The Emperor lays great stress on complete

secrecy being observed. Strange to say, Mr Fould wishes that none of his colleagues, excepting Mr Rouher, should know that we are to discuss these matters. It is really amusing to see men who, when physical force was alone in question, could seize their opponents in bed and carry them off to prison, are so wanting in moral courage as to be frightened at a handful of Protectionists. But so it is.

LXVII.

MR COBDEN TO M. CHEVALIER.

RUE DE BERRY,
31 October 1859.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—My interview with the Emperor was so far very satisfactory that he put pertinent questions and listened to me patiently. But, of course, he did not lead me to expect what his policy would be. I had no right to expect so much. I must return to London in a week to meet an American gentleman on private business and shall not be back in Paris again for some days. I wish you could leave your vines and sheep at Lodène and come and see me before I go. What shall I say to Mr Gladstone? I am not sure that the ministers of the Emperor appreciate so fully as I could wish the importance of doing something to convince the world that he is going to do the work of Sir Robert Peel, rather than of the first Napoleon. M. Persigny feels this because, being on the spot,

he knows what the state of opinion is in England. The alarmists and the incendiaries have got complete possession of the public ear. The feeling in England is now worse than ever. Not a voice is raised on the side of moderation. I met, at Messrs Rothschilds' counting-house, Meyer Rothschild, the M.P. from England, and asked him what news he brought from the other side, and his answer was,— 'There is one universal feeling of mistrust of Louis Napoleon.' It is useless to go into the cause of this, or to try to show it injustice. He has enemies, of course, interested in spreading a hatred and mistrust of him, and there are parties in England who, for their own ends, foster this feeling of panic. The part for a wise man like the Emperor to perform is to do a striking act, which shall at once put his enemies in the wrong, and give those who, like myself, have taken the unpopular side in England an argument by which we can turn the tables on the panic-mongers. Nothing but a decided measure of Commercial Reform will suffice for this purpose. M. de Persigny knows it. I wish he were here to infuse a little of his energy and earnestness into the *entourage*. But I want to see you in order to feel sure, before I return to England, that Mr Fould and Mr Rouher comprehend fully the importance of the proposal I have, in an informal way, to make to the French Government. I think I could promise that every article of French manufacture may enter England free of duty ; that wine shall be subject to one shilling a gallon instead of 8s. 9d., and that brandy shall pay only the same duty as the excise duty charged on our own home-made spirits. Your corn, cattle, oil, etc. already come into England duty free. What more can we do? Is it possible that your Government can hesitate to enter upon

the same path. The present time seems opportune, nay, providential, for inaugurating this new policy. Mr Fould tells me that eight or ten millions sterling are still in hand from the proceeds of the war loan. There is a sum amply sufficient to cover the deficit arising from reduction of duties, or to buy off the opposition of your ironmasters. How much better a use for the money than building ships of war, which will only serve as an excuse for our Government in England to build twice as many more.

Come if you can. At all events, I can do no more, for I am only suspected of selfish British interests if I push forward my views. Though, as Heaven knows, my only object is to promote peace and good-will between the two countries. A war in which England and France, and consequently all Europe, should be involved, could have no other or better result than to give a permanent ascendancy to the United States. A flow of capital and a rush of popularity would take place to the Western Hemisphere, which would soon hold the same relation to the old world which Europe does to Asia. Our reason and conscience revolt at such wickedness and insanity.

I received the honour of an invitation to Compiègne. My wife's health precluded me from taking part in such gorgeous scenes. But I wish I could have the opportunity of meeting the Emperor *tête-à-tête* again, although his head must be full of other matters (less important matters I think). Yet I would back him to understand my plan, after two or three interviews, better than anyone about him. Let me know when you will be back.—And believe me,
ever yours very truly,

R. COBDEN.

M. MICHEL CHEVALIER.

LXVIII.

Mr COBDEN to Mrs SCHWABE.

LYONS, 4 *February* 1860.

MY DEAR MRS SCHWABE,—We are so far on our way in safety, and I write more particularly to ask you to see your Venetian friend and obtain for me a few particulars in writing, similar to what he gave me in conversation, about the present state of that part of Italy. I have written my questions on the other side. Be pleased not to name my visit to Prince M. in such a way as to lead to any publicity as to what passed between us, as it would be a breach of confidence. The particulars can be sent to me at Cannes. We beg our kindest regards to you all. We have often talked of you, and forget not how much you have done and *suffered* for our convenience and comfort, since we have been under the same roof. I am afraid neither you nor Harriet will be inclined to wish to be again fellow-lodgers with a diplomatist!—Believe me, yours very truly,
R. COBDEN.

We go to-morrow to Toulon straight. You can tear off the half sheet on the other side.

P.S.—I got up this morning early to write the enclosed in my shirt sleeves in my bedroom. On coming to 82 Rue de l'Universite at ten, to renew my drudgery with the Birmingham men over pots and pans, etc., I find your letter of Saturday's date. If

I were not absolutely a prisoner here, where absence, even for a day, would be treason to my own country, and to a great principle, I should be much tempted to steal away quietly to Vienna to try to effect such an arrangement as you speak of. I should not at all fear being called Utopian, or be deterred by the chances of failure which would certainly be greater than those of success. The Austrian Government and Emperor have not the intelligence of Louis Napoleon. They are obstinate and proud—all very bad qualities to deal with. But I literally cannot be absent from my post here even for an hour.

CANNES, 10 *Feby.* 1860.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I am really very much obliged to you for all the trouble you are giving yourself about the stray letters and parcels that are reaching me through the Embassy. I beg you not to hesitate about opening anything that may seem to require inspection. That poor lady's mad rhapsodies always make their appearance whenever any event has brought my name into greater prominence than usual.* It was lucky that Lord Cowley treated the matter so coolly. By the way, you must make every allowance if he should seem to have too little time for meeting such accidental claims on his attention. He is very fully occupied—more so than I had supposed before I became acquainted with the business of the Embassy. I daresay much of his attention is given to matters which can lead to no very useful result, and which are not the less irksome because he knows they are not likely to be of much use to anybody; but they are affairs which, in a talking free country like England, are always liable

* Rhapsodies from an unknown admirer of Cobden's.

to be made of importance by newspapers and politicians, and therefore an ambassador is always obliged to mind his ways, and take care of his 'P's' and 'Q's.'

I have seen a good deal of the Baron Bunsen, whose house is close to ours. It is a great privilege to be near such a neighbour. Singular enough, we have, in the room above ours, a fellow-lodger, Miss Schnell, formerly a schoolmistress at Brighton with whom Mr Bright's daughter was placed, and with whom I was acquainted there. She is a German who became a converted Quakeress. She has now given up her school. It is odd how people meet again. I am much obliged by your kind care of my young folks. Pray remember me most affectionately to them, and with kind regards to all about you.—
I remain, very truly yours, R. COBDEN.

My wife will write to-morrow.

CANNES, 15 Feb'y. 1860.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I have written to M. Pinckerle to thank him for his very exact and detailed information. The accounts are indeed deplorable. Mr Charles de Bunsen, who has been eight years at Turin, and is now on a visit here to his father, more than corroborates all that Mr Pinckerle says about the state of Venetia. *The Times* newspaper, forwarded by your kind intervention from London, reached me yesterday, and gave me the full report of Gladstone's speech in the House. His budget is a very clever one. The *paper* duties will catch all the 'press,' and the wine duties all the rich people, whilst the prospect of a trade with France, at least, will insure the support of the manufacturing and trading world.

Altogether, I think the scheme is most adroitly prepared, and I should think the Tories will have but small chance of upsetting it. But I shall say no more about politics, for I am endeavouring for a few days to forget them.

—Believe me, yours very truly,

R. COBDEN.

HOTEL MEURICE, PARIS,
26 March 1860.

MY DEAR MRS SCHWABE,—We arrived here on Saturday evening. I cannot say we were lucky in our visit to Cannes, so far as the weather was concerned. It was either windy, or cold, or wet during our stay. The situation of the lodgings which Miss Bunsen took for us was not very good. We were in the dusty street of the little town, and had to step out doors merely into the high road. But everything was compensated for by our being next door to the Bunsens. I paid the Baron a visit daily, and had the privilege of listening to his charming conversation, which in English is superior to almost any man I know. What must it be when you converse with him in his own language? He is not quite recovered in health, and had a severe attack whilst we were there. He cannot walk much, but we drove out several times together. The Baroness and her amiable daughters were kind and friendly to my wife. Indeed, all that we could possibly wish in our neighbours, we found in that excellent family. My wife and I managed to improve our health, and to be really quite comfortable, even in our little pinched apartments.—And believe me, yours very truly,

R. COBDEN.

69 CHAMPS ELYSEES,
8 June 1860.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I heard from Mr Bright that he had been to see you, which is all the news I have heard from you. I am sure you would have been grievously hurt to hear of the sad accident which had befallen Miss Bunsen. The Baron is, I fear, not much better. You were in the secret from the very first of all my negotiations, and yet it has been remarked how wonderfully well the secret was kept.* There is an article in the *Edinburgh Review*, written by someone who knows nearly all about the negotiations. He pays a compliment to the four or five men who were in the secret for the way in which it was guarded from publicity. But he does not know that a lady was taken into our confidence, and that she did not betray it! Matters are going on very satisfactorily here, and I am quite sure the result will be better than I ever expected. Believe nothing to the contrary. Be sure no one in London knows so well as I do what is being done. There are some 'Satanic' spirits, as Bright calls them, who are predicting a failure and trying to produce one. But they will be disappointed.—Believe me, yours truly,

R. COBDEN.

PARIS, 82 RUE DE L'UNIVERSITE,
5th July 1860.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I hope you duly received the answer to your letter.

Garibaldi is a great and good man—great by his moral, even more than his intellectual, qualities, and in this respect he resembles Washington, to whom

* The French Commercial Treaty.

he has been compared. But I wish he had a people to deal with more resembling those Anglo-Saxons in America, with whom Washington was united. I fear very much that Garibaldi will find himself involved in great difficulties and embarrassments, owing to the terribly degraded condition of the population of that island. It is one of the most ignorant and debased communities in Europe. All the islands in the Mediterranean, such as Sardinia, Corsica, Elba and Sicily, contain populations very much less civilised than those on the mainland; partly owing to the little communication they have had with the rest of the world, and partly from the insecurity in which they lived till a late period, owing to the hostile visits of the Barbary and Algerine Corsairs. In the case of Sicily, I am afraid it was not any advantage to its people that the English held possession of it during the war with Napoleon.

If he had been allowed to conquer it, he would have abolished the feudal aristocracy (which we everywhere preserved), and would have applied to it his own code. Sicily is, owing to the predominance of the feudal system and the priests, even more ignorant and degraded than the Neapolitan Kingdom on the mainland. However, Garibaldi is a true patriot and an honest man, and not a self-seeker, and ladies do nothing derogatory to themselves in doing him honour.

My task here is likely to be still prolonged for some months. I had no idea, when we began our little conspiracy in November last, in Rue de Berry, that I was embarking in a two months' labour. However, the result will justify the time and trouble I am giving to it. Do not let any false rumours discourage you about our undertaking. The Government here are acting in perfectly good faith, and the

Treaty will prove a great reality. I have had nothing but frankness and good treatment *here*. The lies and obstruction that have been thrown in my path have come from *your* side of the water. However, I laugh at it all.

RICHARD COBDEN.

PARIS, 82 RUE DE L'UNIVERSITE,
13 August 1860.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I cannot postpone answering your letter, which, although dated July 28, has just reached me, but I am so much engaged as not to be able to write at length. I did not get a letter from Bonn, and have never heard a word of the Bunsens, or rather from the Baron, since he went to Bonn. But I fear he is not in very good health for writing. I have still no reason to doubt that matters will be brought to a satisfactory result here, but it will still take a couple of months. I observe what you say about my being on my guard. I assure you, my experience of politicians does not inspire me with an excess of confidence. Besides, I have not that excess of the 'harmlessness of the dove' over the 'wisdom of the serpent' in my nature which some of my partial friends—yourself among the number—suppose. But I have again and again repeated in writing hence to my friends that, up to the present moment, I have experienced nothing but candour and straightforwardness in my dealings with the French Government, whilst all the misrepresentation, falsehood and difficulties which I have had to encounter have come from the English side of the Channel. Nothing disgusts me more than the cowardice and want of honest principle in our own politicians. 'Anything for a momentary cry which

may give a triumph over a political opponent,' seems to be the motto of our party men. You will see that, in less than a couple of years, all our politicians will be eager enough to claim the merit of having always been friendly to the French Treaty. The paragraph you enclosed from *The Times*, giving a conversation of mine, is one of those rascally acts of eavesdropping for which American newspaper writers are so notorious. There is a good deal of the paragraph which agrees with what I have *thought*, but whether I expressed it in private conversation is more than I could swear to—as no one expects to be made responsible for private gossip. There ought to be the punishment of the pillory or the stocks revived for those who publish in newspapers the unguarded remarks which fall from a man in private conversation, when he frequently speaks merely to provoke a reply and keep people from going to sleep over too serious an interchange of views. No, I did not help the Emperor to prepare his pamphlet about the English and French armies and navies. Take my word for it, however, that there is a vast deal of systematic lying in England about the French armaments. How could Government succeed in extracting £30,000,000 a year for our army and navy, unless they first frightened the people with the notion that the Emperor of the French was coming to rob them. You remember that charming old lady, Mrs Woolley's landlady, whom we visited, who remarked, 'Pauvre John Bull quand on veut enlever son agent on lui fait peur de nous!' I am quite ashamed of the child-like simplicity with which Englishmen allow themselves to be imposed upon respecting anything French. You will see a great and sudden reaction in the public mind soon. As soon as the Government has secured the neces-

sary supplies for the year, it will have no further interest for the present in keeping up the delusion. Then common sense, aided by the publication of the new French tariff, will put an end to the panic.

—Ever yours truly,

RICHARD COBDEN.

PARIS, 82 RUE DE L'UNIVERSITE,
10th September 1860.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—The excuse that one is too busy to write to a friend is generally a mere unmeaning phrase, but with me at the present moment it is an absolute truth. It seems as if my work here had only just begun. The 'Inquiry' having been finished, the plenipotentiaries are now at the final stage of the Treaty, fixing the amount of duty on each article of the French tariff. One part of this must be finished and published before the 1st Oct. It relates to iron and the other metals. We are now up to our chins in pots, kettles, locks, scissors, anchors, Britannia metal, etc., etc. How we are to finish by the time mentioned passes my comprehension. We are working night and day almost to accomplish our task. As respects our movements in the winter, I am still absolutely in the clouds. It depends indeed on the completion of my work here, about which I do not see my way at present. I still dream of passing a few months of the winter in a hot climate to escape from the cold fogs and the public meetings of England. Your friend Garibaldi seems to be getting on almost too fast for his fame, for everything gives way at the sound of his name without even the necessity for fighting. Is it not an evidence of the thorough rottenness of the kingdom of Naples? Here is a country with eight or ten

millions of people, with army, navy, church and aristocracy all impotent to defend the throne, because the public sentiment of the whole world had undermined its foundations in the opinion of all classes of Neapolitans. This ought to be a warning to other potentates and to other aristocracies. If you see the Bunsens pray remember me most kindly to them all. I often think of the Baron, of whom I have talked with Garnier Pages, and Reynaud and Hy. Martin frequently. I trust we may hear better accounts of his health. If you see Mr and Mrs Meyer give them my kind respects. The children are well at Dunsford. Apologising for this hasty note.—Believe me, yours truly, R. COBDEN.

LXIX.

SPEECH delivered by Mr COBDEN on the FRENCH TREATY at a Meeting at Rochdale. *June 26th, 1861.*

I have been, as your worthy Mayor has stated, engaged in arranging a commercial treaty with France. I have been, as you are aware, honoured with the confidence of our sovereign, and aided by colleagues whose services in this matter I would not for a moment appropriate to myself, I have been endeavouring to make such arrangements as shall lead two countries peculiarly designed by Providence to confer mutual benefits upon each other, but

which, owing to the folly and perhaps wickedness of man, have been for centuries rather seeking to injure and destroy each other—I have been seeking to form arrangements by which two countries shall be united together in mutual bonds of dependence and I hope of future peace. It has been truly stated by the Mayor that France has been hitherto as a nation, attached to those principles of commercial restriction which we in England have but lately released ourselves from, and which have cost us thirty years of pretty continuous labour, and the services of three or four most eminent statesmen, in order to bring us to the present state of comparative freedom of commerce. The French, on the contrary, had taken hardly a single step in this direction; it was left for the present Emperor—and he alone had power to accomplish it with the aid of his Minister of Commerce, who for eighteen months has scarcely given himself twenty-four hours of leisure. It was left for them to accomplish in France, in the course of a couple of years, what has taken us in England at least thirty years to effect. I mention this because I wish you to know it, and I have a reason for it, which I will state in a moment. I wish it to be borne in mind what has been the magnitude of the task which the French Government has had to accomplish on this occasion. They had to confront powerful influences who were at the moment entirely unbroken, and they had to attack the whole body of monopoly in France; whereas, if you recollect, in this country our statesmen began by sapping and mining, and throwing over the smaller interests, in order that they might form a coalition of them against the greater monopolies. Everything has had to be done in France during the last eighteen months;

much remains to be done, which I hope will be accomplished in a short time to come; but I wish you to understand distinctly the magnitude of the task which the French Government has had to accomplish, because thereby hangs a tale and an argument about which I shall have a word or two to say in a moment. There is a peculiarity in the condition of French industry which gives a fair prospect and a reasonable anticipation of a mutual and beneficial intercourse between the two countries. It is a very singular fact that France, which, by its social organisation and by its political maxims, is, perhaps, one of the most democratic nations of the world, that this people are almost exclusively employed in the manufacture of articles of great luxury, and that they depend almost exclusively upon the consumption of the aristocratic and rich; whereas England, on the contrary, the most aristocratic people in the world, are almost wholly employed in the manufacture of those articles which minister to the comfort and benefit of the great masses of the community. You have here, therefore, two peoples who by their distinct geniuses are admirably suited for a mutual exchange of the products of each other's industry; and I argue from it, as your Mayor has intimated, in favour of the great advantage which the masses of the French people will derive from the treaty which has been lately arranged with that country. The French people—I am speaking of working people—are, in comparison with the English people, a badly-clothed population. Anyone who has travelled in the winter time from Calais to Dover cannot fail to have observed the contrast between those blue round frocks which the Frenchmen wear, and the more comfortable, because warmer, woollen or worsted garments which the

English workman at that season of the year possesses. It reminds me—the condition of the French population in clothing—reminds me of the position in which this population of England was placed with regard to their food twenty-five years ago, before the Corn Laws were touched. At that time our population was a badly-fed people; they were living, many of them, upon roots, whilst there were some six to eight millions of quarters less of grain consumed than ought to have been, and have been consumed annually since, when the people were permitted to obtain it. Just as Free Trade caused this people to be better fed, so it will cause the French population to be better clothed, by precisely the same process by which we have arrived at this result in England—partly because there will be a considerable importation into France of your manufactures and wares, and partly because competition will improve the French manufactures themselves, just as the supply of corn came partly from the importation of the produce of foreign countries, and partly by the improvement which competition has imparted to your agriculture. But we, on our side, will obtain, and have obtained, great benefits also from this change. The change on our side is our merit; but the change on the other side is the merit of the French Government. I confess, as an Englishman, I have a right, and it is my duty, most to consider how this matter is benefiting you, not by what it will allow you to export to France, but the way by which I seek to benefit the population is by allowing more of the good things to come in to them from abroad. Well, the merit of the whole measures of our Government—and I give them the credit of putting this great final coping stone upon the edifice of

Free Trade—I mean so far as the abolition of all protective duties goes, I give the merit to the present Government and their great Chancellor of the Exchequer. They have abolished the last remaining protective duties in our tariff. Now, mark what the advantage of this will be to us as a mercantile people—an advantage which has not been sufficiently appreciated, I venture to observe. By removing every duty upon all articles of foreign manufacture we have made England a free port for manufactured goods, just as we had made it before a free port for corn and raw materials. The consequence is that all articles of foreign manufacture may be brought to England without let or hindrance if we find it to our advantage to consume them; and our colonists, coming from Australia, Canada and America, may find here not merely everything which England produces which they may want, but they may find all sorts of German and French produce, which they may buy without visiting the Continent to purchase them. That I consider to us, as a mercantile people, to be an immense advantage, which will be by-and-by fully appreciated, but the importance of which has not yet been altogether anticipated. Besides this, we are going to import commodities from France which have been hitherto prohibited, which will not only be to their advantage, but our own. Take, for instance, the article of wine. We all know that for a century or more, owing to an absurd treaty that was made with Portugal, this country put a prohibitive duty upon French wines, and the consequence has been that the taste of this country has been perverted, and that which is the best article of the kind in the world has been almost a stranger in this land. Well, besides the preferential duty which has

excluded French wines, we have laid on such an enormous amount of duty that nothing but wines of the very strongest character—the effect of which is instantly felt in the head—can be obtained; and a man buying a glass of wine now wants something that will affect his head, and would not buy the fine but comparatively weak wines of France. Every other country in the world but England has regarded the French wines as the best wines in the world. The thing which is adulterated our people have preferred; those who could afford it have preferred the narcotic and inflammatory mixtures called port and sherry. Well, now, a friend of mine lately had the curiosity to look into our national ballads, with a view of making a collection of drinking songs. Well, he told me he found that all the songs were in honour of French wines, Champagne, Burgundy, Bordeaux. They were all old songs, written at a time when our ancestors consumed and preferred French wines; but as soon as they were not allowed to obtain those wines, songs in favour of wines have ceased. My friend arrived at this conclusion, that when the people drank French wines it made them merry, and they sang; but when they drank sherry and port it made them stupid, and they went to sleep. Now, I don't know that I will go quite so far as a lamented friend of mine, a former mayor of Bordeaux, who, travelling in England, paid us a visit in Manchester. At a dinner, when his health had been drunk, in returning thanks, he said,—‘Gentlemen, I have but one test of civilisation everywhere. I ask, “Do the people consume claret?”’ Well, I don't go quite so far as that, but I say that in whatever point of view you regard it—whether it is as a beneficial exchange with France, enabling you to exchange

the products of your industry with the greatest and richest people on the Continent, whether it be in the interests of temperance, whether it be in the interests of health—it is desirable that the taste of England should have at least the opportunity of going back into that natural channel which our forefathers followed when they had, as we have now, access to French wines, at a moderate duty, and the same duty as on other wines. Gentlemen, I am not so sanguine as to expect that a great trade is to grow up between France and England suddenly—tomorrow, or next year. It will require time; but the door has been opened, and opened honestly, and with all sincerity, and I have no doubt, when we have had a sufficient time to correct those errors into which our forefathers fell, that this work, like every other in which we have been engaged, where restrictions have been removed, will be found favourable to the best interests of this country and of France. Now, gentlemen, I confess that the work in which I have been engaged would have but small interest for me if it did not conduce to something different and higher than the mere increase of the beverage of the people of this country. The object which I have sought, you know right well, has been not merely to promote the physical well-being of these two people, though that itself is an object worthy of all care, but my aim and hope has been to promote such a change as shall lead to a better moral and political tone between the two nations.

L X X.

SPEECH delivered by MR COBDEN at the Mansion House, on the occasion of his being presented with the Freedom of the City of London. 17th July 1861.

My Lord Mayor, my Lords and Gentlemen,— My first duty is to others rather than to myself, and I cannot say a word without entering a preliminary *caveat* in opposition to the merits that have been so generously awarded to me in connexion with the triumph of a great cause, in the success of which I claim little more than accidental opportunity and a willing heart, but in the advocacy of which I have many colleagues here, and many more necessarily absent, whose names I should not wish, and whose merits I will never permit, to be forgotten when this question is brought under public discussion. It is not merely those with whom I have acted during the last twenty years to whom I refer, but we must not forget those great men who went before us. Standing here in this hall in this city of London, we must not forget that one of the very first demonstrations by practical men ever made in behalf of the principles of Free Trade emanated from the merchants of London now forty-one years ago. That declaration was drawn up by the hand of Mr Tooke, who ought to be held in reverence by those who survived him; and that declaration, as afterwards expressed by Mr Baring, the late Lord Ashburton, really contained

in few words almost all that was ever said, or could be said, in favour of the principle of Free Trade. I think I can quote it from memory now. It is 'that the maxim of buying in the cheapest market and selling in the dearest, which always regulates the transactions of individual merchants, is equally applicable as the best rule of the trade of a whole nation.' I really don't know that any amplification could better define what is the meaning of the words 'Free Trade' than does that short sentence. It means that it is the interest of men to exchange superfluities for necessities. It has not the base and sordid meaning some people have given it—that it is founded on selfishness. It means that it is the interest of mankind to go and seek a commodity where it is cheap—that is, where it is plentiful, and convey it to another locality where it is dear; in other words, where it is scarce. And, if you would have an illustration of this on the largest scale in the world—though I am not going to give you a Free Trade lecture to-night—I could not do better than refer to the results of the last harvest in this country. I believe I am not incorrect when I say that the last harvest in this country, taking into consideration the immense extent of land now under cultivation, and the immensely increased population to be fed from our native agriculture, presented a greater deficiency than was ever known in the memory of living man. I am not exaggerating when I say that within twelve months we imported from foreign countries upwards of 15,000,000 quarters of grain of all kinds adapted for the food of man and beast; for the visitations of Providence narrowed the means of sustenance not only for the human species but for the inferior animals also. I believe I am not exaggerating in

saying that 8,000,000 quarters of grain adapted for the food of man within the twelve months were necessarily imported into this country. By what process? Last autumn it was known that our harvest was failing. It was known that millions of people in this country would be wanting food beyond the supply from our own soil. What was to be done? Some might think we should have relied on the energies of the Government. Fortunately, we had a better dependence. We depended on that simple principle of buying in the cheapest and selling in the dearest market. The harvests that were ripening on the remotest steppes of Russia, on the distant prairies of America, and on the almost inaccessible plateaux of Spain, were wafted to our shores, brought to our granaries, and distributed through the towns and villages of this country, finding their way to the families of millions of our people who would otherwise have died of hunger. All by this process went on without the aid of Government, without any recognition of a public duty, silently and tranquilly, without producing any convulsion. That, gentlemen, was the result of Free Trade. And after such experience how can we doubt its successful operation in any emergency that can arise? How can we withhold our faith from a principle which is greater than charity, because it steps in and does the work of charity on such a mighty scale that human benevolence cannot otherwise compass? After this illustration can we do otherwise than acknowledge that this principle of Free Trade is one to which we may bow with all humility, acknowledging it as one of the ordinances of the Creator—that it is, in fact, the international common law of the Almighty? Now, gentlemen, what is the treaty which I pre-

sume I may say in a certain sense we are here met to talk of—what is it but an extension, in a modified form, of the principle of Free Trade we have adopted ourselves in the case of our Corn Laws? It is an extension of that principle to the affairs of two great neighbouring countries, admirably situated by their proximity, by their great wealth, by their great numbers, and by the variety of their productions to sustain an extensive commerce with each other, and to their mutual advantage; but the treaty of which I speak is not a treaty in the ancient signification, when it was thought that the moment two nations came to agree together it must be to have exclusive dealings with each other, by charges or arrangements with each other from which all other nations were excluded—these two nations having sat down to make an exclusive bargain with each other, their chief thought being how they might cheat each other, and generally ending in each of the parties cheating himself. No, gentlemen, this treaty was of a totally different character. England sought from France no exclusive privileges; she offered no exclusive advantages to France. All we gave to her we gave at the same time to the whole world; and we asked nothing from France but what we cheerfully allowed her at the same time to extend to all mankind. You had, in fact, two countries agreeing to do for each other a great good, and to shake hands at the same time and agree to do it together. There are some persons, I believe, who are opposed to this process. I can only say I think they must be very difficult to please. I think it would be very difficult to come to an agreement with such persons on any subject whatever. I certainly should not like to be shut up with any of them on a jury at the Old Bailey during the dog days. The treaty of which we speak, I

have no doubt, if the peace for which we all pray can be preserved to us for five or ten years, will have opened the door to such a commerce between these two great countries as will surpass—it must, in the nature of things, surpass the commerce existing between any other two countries of the world. There are nearly 70,000,000 of people placed side by side, rather than separated, by a narrow arm of the sea, possessing such a diversity of natural endowments that they seem, of all nations of the world, to be the most adapted for a beneficial commerce with each other, who yet by the perversity of legislation have been busily engaged in nothing less than thwarting the designs of Providence and preventing these advantages. Some people have said with regard to this treaty that it was entered into without the consent of public opinion in France, and that therefore, when the ten years for which the treaty is made expire, the danger is that the policy now adopted in France will be reversed. But I have seen no proof in France that public opinion is not in favour of the policy of the Government. On the contrary, since the treaty was signed everything has indicated that, with the logical talent and the quickness of perception which characterise our neighbours, they are making rapid progress still further in those principles. They have, for instance, since I was in Paris negotiating this treaty, by a vote of the Legislature, abolished their sliding scale, and left the import and export of grain practically free. The city of Lyons, whose great heart and high intelligence are well represented by my friend at my side, has, by a formal declaration of opinion, pronounced in favour of absolute Free Trade as far as regards the articles in which it is interested. Lyons has nobly and manfully declared—‘We own no

superiority in the articles we manufacture, we seek no protection, and are ready to meet the whole world in the fair field of competition.' I see, therefore, no prospect of the reversal of the principles adopted by the Emperor's Government. You may ask me whether I think other nations will follow in the footsteps of France and England. I frankly avow to you I am not much concerned about that question. Whatever France and England unite to do, whether it be a policy of war or peace, they will assuredly draw the whole civilised world within the circle of their influence. Any other nation which should attempt to hold aloof from the policy which France and England have now frankly embraced would find themselves so far behind in the race of civilisation and wealth that their own self love, if no other motive existed, would induce them to follow the example we have set. After all, the great merit I see in this new arrangement between these two countries is the moral advantage which I hope will arise from the circumstance that Frenchmen and Englishmen will better know and understand each other than they have hitherto done. Ignorance is the mother of prejudice, whether among nations or individuals. You have half gained the heart of a man when you have shown yourself to him, and are known by him. If we go back to the olden time we find that the ignorance of the people when dealing with unexplored countries pictured their inhabitants as endowed with animal appendages ; as having but one eye ; as Cyclopean in their character ; the most monstrous absurdities took possession of the human mind with reference to the population of other countries. Even in regard to the Continent we all remember not very many years ago our familiar ideas were that Frenchmen habitu-

ally ate in their soup an animal that is addicted to damp places and has an unpleasant voice. We all remember how fond we were of investing them with wooden shoes. Nor were they more generous to us, for they fancied we sold our wives commonly at public auctions, and never uttered a sentence without an oath. We have now passed these gross delusions and errors with regard to our neighbours, but nothing has struck me more in my intercourse of eighteen months with the French people than the profound ignorance which the two people have with respect to each other. The English and Chinese seem to be almost as well acquainted with each other, I speak of the familiar knowledge which the mass of the English people have of the mass of the French people, and I look forward, therefore, with the greatest satisfaction to that change we are about to witness when Englishmen and Frenchmen will necessarily be tempted in the pursuit of business to mingle with each other, and thus better to understand each other. We have mutual advantages to gain—advantages of a novel as well as of a material nature. The French will be found more polite, especially among the working classes. I remember reading a letter of the late Sydney Smith, who was not merely a wit but a philosopher—when he went to France after the war, writing to his wife from Calais, he declared that he found the washerwomen of France had manners equal to a duchess in England. We can hardly say so much as that now ; but any one may see that in manners the common people of France are superior to us. They, on the other hand, will have something to learn of us in their business transactions. They may find us brusque and off-hand, but straightforward, and too busy to higgel about our bargains ; but I see nothing but

mutual advantage to be derived from the intercourse between the two countries. Gentlemen, I find it painful to talk of that which, after all, is very much of an egotistical question ; I would therefore refer merely, before concluding, to the peculiar circumstances of this festive occasion. The Lord Mayor has said very truly, that in former times the honour of the citizenship of London has been conferred upon men distinguished in our annals. They have been men whose deeds have been renowned in our history—men whom their fellow-countrymen were proud to recognise as their benefactors. They have been men actuated, I am sure, in their deeds, which have been glorious, by as pure and as much patriotism as any in our own day ; but there was a peculiarity in nearly all those presentations which distinguished them from that we have now witnessed. They generally had effected triumphs for their own country over foreign nations. We are met here on the present occasion to find the accents of foreigners mingling their voices with our own ; rejoicing over the triumph of the principles of Free Trade. Here is my friend, M. Chevalier, whom I am proud to see in an English assembly, because it is the first occasion on which I could in all sincerity say how deeply I consider the whole civilised world to be indebted to him for his exertions in this cause. He will, without any grudging, be admitted by his countrymen to have done more than any living man in France to advance our principles. Moral courage I find not a cheap article anywhere. Englishmen have more physical courage than moral bravery ; and in France everyone of my friends will admit, though they have the physical courage of lions, they don't like to find themselves in a minority on a public question ; but my friend M.

Chevalier, though filling the highest social and intellectual position, never hesitated to proclaim his principles and hold up the banner of Free Trade when it had few partisans. Then, I have near me my friend, M. Dufour, for whom I feel the deepest respect and affection. We have also with us the representative of agriculture in France, the representative of the flourishing seaport of Bordeaux and others, and we rejoice to see them present on this occasion. These, I say, then, gentlemen, are signs of progress. They are proofs that our policy at this time of day is expansive—that we are touching upon a more cosmopolitan age of wider sympathies. This reflection encourages me in the faith I entertain, that we live in an age when the interests of men are fusing and confounding; and if I were too credulous in that belief, that this will lead to an era of peace rather than the perpetuation of passions that may lead to war, I think I am sanctioned by the deductions of political economy in that belief. I might appeal to a still higher standard, which tells us that all nations are made of one blood.] I beg, in my own name, and in the name of those present and absent who have been my colleagues in the struggle which has issued in the triumph of sound principles, to return you, my Lord Mayor, ladies and gentlemen, my very sincere thanks for the generous reception you have given me.

L X X I.

Mr COBDEN to Mrs SCHWABE.

LONDON, 21 *February* 1862.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I am obliged by your sending me Lady Clarence's * note. Had you been in town, however, I could not have had the pleasure of meeting you at dinner at the Admiralty, for I have laid down a rule not to dine out anywhere this season. Dinner-parties on a large scale are to me a bore, and besides, they are a sacrifice of health. I should like to see a change in our habits, and an imitation of the French style of visiting, where people go and come for the sake of the society, and not for a huge costly dinner. A change has taken place respecting my motion. After I had given notice in the House, Mr Horsfall, the Tory M.P. for Liverpool, complained that I had been poaching in his domain, as he had given notice of a similar motion last year. I was very glad to give way to him, and most happy to find him eager to take it in hand, as it will be more likely to meet support from his side of the House. I shall, therefore, second him. It will not interfere with my speech.

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R. COBDEN.

* Lady Clarence Paget.

L X X I I.

Mr COBDEN to Mr E. T. SIMPSON on the
MALT TAX.

MIDHURST, *February 5, 1864.*

DEAR SIR,—You ask me, in your capacity of chairman of the Wakefield Farmers' Club, to give you any information which may be useful in obtaining the repeal of the Malt Tax. There is really but one way of succeeding in any public agitation—*take the ground of principle and pressure.* When I speak of principle in connection with the Malt Tax, I mean that the Anti-Malt-Tax League, if you form one, should, as the Anti-Corn-Law League did, pledge itself to the total and immediate repeal of the tax, and then allow no discussion within its own body upon any other subject. You have a stronger argument for taking this ground than we had, inasmuch as you are dealing with an excise tax, and we were opposing a customs duty; for it has been laid down as a rule by Chancellors of the Exchequer, and invariably acted on, that whenever an excise duty is reduced it should be totally abolished, because one of the greatest objections to such taxes—the interference of the exciseman with the processes of production—applies equally whether the duty be great or small.

The agriculturists have a peculiar claim to the observance of this rule in the present case, inasmuch as the best farmers have protested against the duty, on the ground that it interferes with the free application of their capital to the fattening of stock upon

malt, and thus prevents the profitable growth of barley on heavy soils.


It has often occurred to me to compare the case of the British agriculturist, who, after raising a bushel of barley, is compelled to pay a tax of sixty per cent. before he is permitted to convert it into a beverage for his own consumption, with what I have seen in foreign countries, and I can really call to mind nothing so hard and unreasonable. I am quite sure that the cultivators of vineyards in France, or the growers of olives in Spain and Italy, would never tolerate such treatment of their wine and oil. And the extraordinary feature of your case is that it has been made, as I will, in a few words show you, the flagrant exception to an otherwise universal rule.

In 1848 I published a financial programme, under the title of 'The National Budget,' in which I recommended the repeal or reduction of a great many duties and taxes involving a very large amount of revenue. Your letter has induced me to refer to that document, and it is a suggestive fact that every change then recommended has been effected, with the notable exception of that item in which the farmers are interested.

In my projected budget I suggested that the tea duty, which was then 2s. 2d. a lb., should be reduced to 1s.; that the coffee duties should be equalised, the wine duties revised, and the legacy duty applied to real estate. I proposed that the excise duties on malt, hops, soap, paper and bricks should be abolished; and that the window tax and the taxes on knowledge, the timber duties, and the duties on butter, cheese and upwards of 100 smaller items of tariff should be abolished. These were all the recommendations contained in my budget; and it is, I repeat, a suggestive fact that all these changes

have been carried out to the minutest particular, with the sole exception of malt, the duty on which remains precisely the same as it was in 1848—namely, 2s. 7d. a bushel and five per cent. I do not allude to this for the purpose of claiming merit for myself, for really I had but little personal share in the good work, but merely that I may remark, for your information and guidance, that these reforms have been effected only because they have had their earnest and persevering advocates.

Now, I confess that I do not entertain very sanguine hopes that the agriculturists will be more fortunate during the next fifteen years than they have been in the past. The truth is, the county members and the farmers do not, in their hearts, seem to pull very cordially together in this business. The moment the repeal of the malt tax is mentioned, hints are thrown out by the minister of the day, that, if repealed, the amount must be made good from a tax on property, and the question is dropped. Now, be assured that the House of Commons will never vote any substitute for the malt tax. The reason why I should hail a *bona fide* movement of the county constituencies for the repeal of the tax is, that I believe it must be accompanied by a reduction of our present wasteful Government expenditure. We have for several succeeding sessions seen the Chancellor of the Exchequer literally raising signals of distress, and inviting the country to his aid in resisting the expenditure forced upon him. Every experienced member of the House knows that the extravagance in certain Government departments increases just in proportion to the amount of money they can obtain from the treasury. Withhold from the Government four or five millions of income, and still the revenue will exceed by five or six millions



the amount which sufficed for the average expenditure of Sir Robert Peel's administration from 1841 to 1846; and after long observation and reflection I believe this to be the only process by which we can ever put a check to that reckless waste of public money, especially in obsolete and useless naval constructions, and gigantic and abortive experiments in manufacturing establishments, which, without any gain of efficiency, has swollen our budgets to their recent enormous dimensions; and by this process alone can we hope to see an early curtailment of our colonial expenditure, by which we fool away millions yearly for the defence of communities who are twice as competent to pay for their own protection as we are for ours.

I will only add that should this movement assume the character of an honest and earnest effort to abolish an unjust act, and not of a mere plaything for politicians, it shall have my sympathy and support.—
I remain, truly yours, RICHARD COBDEN.

LXXIII.

MR COBDEN TO MRS SCHWABE.

MIDHURST, 9 Feb'y. 1864.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I return the enclosed,* and have really read the printed letters! The point of

* About the Sleswig-Holstein question.